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# RETAIL SALESMANSHIP

By

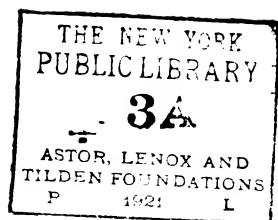
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**To**  
**MY DAUGHTER MARGARET**



## PREFACE

During the past decade American retail merchandising methods have undergone many changes. Increased competition has brought clearly home to the merchant the fact that service is the keynote of successful merchandising, and a careful analysis of service has clearly demonstrated that the salesperson—the most important connecting link between the store and the public—has been neglected. Progressive merchants are realizing the need of a systematic training for salespersons. This book is written to meet the demand from schools and from progressive retailers for a practical textbook on the subject.

The aim of this treatise is to express clearly and in a logical manner the fundamental principles underlying retail salesmanship. Especially in retail salesmanship, however, theory and practice must be closely linked together. To make it possible to link these two essentials adequately in the classroom, it is necessary to have at hand a large number of concrete illustrations, extracts not merely from a wide range of books but also from current trade journals and periodicals dealing with merchandise. This need has led to the preparation of an extensive "Source Book" made up wholly of such illustrative material and closely linked with the statement of principles set forth in the present volume.

The text volume and the "Source Book" are to be used together. In the "Source Book" the student has at hand a reference library, with a wide range of material supplementing and illustrating the points under study, from sources which would be practically inaccessible to him otherwise. At



the same time, his possession of the separate volume of illustrative matter makes it possible to cut down the text volume to a conveniently compact size—notwithstanding the extent and complexity of the subject—and to present the discussion in flowing and uninterrupted form.

With the increasing attention to the study of retail salesmanship, numerous questions have arisen as to the most effective and available methods of teaching the subject. To answer such questions a third book, on the methods of teaching retail salesmanship, will be added—completing the series. This third book will outline courses in retail salesmanship suitable for schools of various kinds, and will also give methods of presentation and references for supplementary reading.

The series of three books, furnishing a text, a reference library, and a discussion of methods of teaching retail salesmanship, will be of service, it is hoped, to schools which are operating under the Smith-Hughes Bill, to continuation schools which find it necessary to introduce classes in retail salesmanship, to technical schools where such a course is necessary, and to stores where courses in retail salesmanship are given.

NORRIS A. BRISCO

New York University,  
October 25, 1920.

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# RETAIL SALESMANSHIP

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## CHAPTER I

### THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MODERN STORE AND SALESMANSHIP

**The Growth of Human Needs and Wants.**—Every human being has wants that must be satisfied in order to keep him alive. As man develops the more complex and numerous do his necessities become. At birth we need nothing except milk and a warm covering. As we grow older we require more varied food, different kinds of garments and objects for amusement. Year by year our needs develop into wants and desires. The present generation requires many things to make life tolerable that were unknown to our grandfathers, and it is certain that the wants of our grandchildren will be still more numerous. The more our curiosity probes the resources of the earth the more do our wants increase and multiply. An invention or a scientific discovery may engender a whole train of new wants. It is true that some of the number do not last and the wants of today may not be the desires of tomorrow. But in a general way the number of wants from which we free ourselves far from balances those we acquire, and with each generation the needs of mankind multiply as the resources of the earth are developed.

**Development of Business—From Chance to System.**—The motive behind all human activity is the driving force of

human needs and wants. To satisfy hunger and thirst, to secure shelter, and to provide clothing were the chief aims of primitive man, as they are the chief aims of human beings today. The effort to satisfy these needs brings into play what is known as the economic forces of civilization. The process may be expressed as follows—need, effort, satisfaction. The economic life of man is concerned with such efforts and results. The efforts to secure the means for the satisfaction of wants are known as economic activities. Economic activities are of many varied forms and are carried on for many different ends. Business is the name given to many of these activities. At first, business simply meant those activities which provide a livelihood, but later the idea of making a profit was added, and today business is any form of economic activity carried on for profit.

In the early days of commerce business of any importance consisted of either banking or merchant trading, including overseas trading, carried on in ships. These were the only important enterprises involving the investment of a considerable sum of money or requiring any skill or experience in their management. The success of the old-time merchant adventurers depended as much upon favorable weather as shrewd foresight. A storm at sea might mean the loss of a valuable cargo and bring financial ruin. Thus in those days trade was risky and speculative and the modern problems of production or distribution were of no account compared with the importance of insuring the safety of precious cargoes. But with the discoveries and inventions which ushered in the present-day industrial system, the risks of trade have almost disappeared, and the business man is no longer a speculative trader.

**Methods of Producing Goods.**—Man produces goods directly or indirectly to satisfy his wants. Production does not mean the creation of new matter. Neither the farmer nor the manufacturer can add one atom to the existing material of the earth. These men are called producers because they produce “utilities.” Utilities are capacities or qualities in goods which satisfy human wants. The effort of man directed towards the production of utilities is called labor.

In the history of the production of goods four systems of industry have been employed to satisfy human wants:

1. The family system
2. The handicraft system
3. The domestic system
4. The factory system

**The Family System.**—The earliest and simplest method of production was for each family to produce what it required. The word “famulus” is the Latin for servant or slave. All members of the family were treated as servants of the father or head. The family thus constituted the earliest form of business organization. Both producers and consumers were members of the household in which each worked for all and each consumed the products of all. The family of the Roman lord with an army of slaves working for him and that of the feudal baron with his serfs occupying his cottages or houses, are examples of the highest point of development of the family system of production.

**The Handicraft System.**—The family system came to an end with the development of towns as centers of trade and production. The growth of the towns marks the beginning

of a new stage in industrial development, and a new system of production, namely, the handicraft system. The artisan became independent and free to do as he liked and was no longer compelled to work in the home of his feudal lord. He occupied his own house, went to market to buy his raw materials, worked up the raw materials in his own home with his own tools, and sold the product in his own shop to the consumer. The work was all finished by hand, and for this reason the method of production of those days is called the handicraft system. The distinguishing marks of the system were the growing importance of industry, and the rise of an independent class of workmen who conducted business enterprises by themselves. Custom tailors and cobblers of today are survivals of the handicraft workmen.

**The Guilds of the Middle Ages.**—The independent artisans and craftsmen of the Middle Ages gradually combined, for mutual assistance and defense, in associations called "guilds," which played an important rôle in the history of the Middle Ages. The guild system brought about a great increase of wealth. It also brought abuses. The guilds became grasping and exclusive bodies of producers and craftsmen whose selfishness proved a drag upon industry. Membership in each guild was confined to a select few whose right to practice the trade was inherited, and the mass of the workers were not permitted to become members. This attempt to monopolize the work of a particular industry brought about the decay of the handicraft system, and ushered in the next stage of production known as the domestic system.

**The Domestic System of Production.**—During the latter part of the handicraft age the merchant began to play an

important rôle in industry. He not only bought the finished goods but he frequently supplied the raw material and found a market for the finished products of the artisan who worked in his own home independently of membership in a guild. This domestic method of production lasted in England from the middle of the fifteenth to the middle of the eighteenth century, when for the first time a distinction appears between the employer and the worker. Under the domestic system the artisan owned his own tools and worked at home with the assistance of his family. He usually lived in the country and devoted part of his time to tilling the ground around his cottage. The raw product or material of his trade was usually supplied by the merchant or middleman, to whom the artisan returned the finished product in exchange for the remuneration agreed upon for his work. The artisan was thus relieved of the troubles of buying and of selling.

**Growth of the Factory System.**—The domestic system of production came to an end through the desire to economize in production and produce more goods with less effort. This led to the invention of labor-saving devices or machines which substituted mechanical power for human labor. The use of expensive machinery and steam-power made it impossible for men to carry on their work in their homes. The workmen no longer owned their own tools, but simply provided the labor which was applied through machines and in workshops owned by the employer. The grouping of laborers and machinery in buildings for the purpose of production is known as the factory system. The factory took the place of the home as the typical unit of production and the artisans became wage-earners. In this way arose the two industrial



classes of laborers and capitalists, and their interests as we see today have been and are still hard to reconcile.

The new methods of production under the factory system brought about a change in the distribution or sale of goods and the restricted local markets gradually developed into national and world-wide markets. Improved methods of transportation which followed the introduction of the factory system also made it possible for different kinds of production to become localized in regions where there were special facilities for the production of power or where raw material could be easily procured.

**Profit and Competition.**—Profit-making is the aim and object of business activity. Profits depend upon the selling of goods at a price greater than their cost, often in competition with other producers of similar goods. Competition is a thing which the retail merchant must face, because his success depends upon his ability to compete successfully in the market of rival producers and sellers. Competition has been defined as the “effort of rival sellers to dispose of their goods and services,” or the “effort of rival buyers to secure the goods and services which they require.” The effort of the sellers to secure as high a price as possible is limited by the desire of the buyer to pay as low a price as possible. Competition has existed since the beginning of trade and is not the product of our present industrial system, though greatly intensified by this system.

**Benefits of Competition.**—The growth of invention, improvements in transportation, and gradual accumulations of capital have all tended to increase the size of the producing plant. To dispose of the increased product it became neces-

sary to look for markets beyond national boundaries. To secure the advantage of producing on a large scale, a much larger product must be disposed of, and this greatly intensified competition. The best possible method of selling a product in a competitive market is to undersell one's competitor. Competition has resulted in an effort to decrease the cost of production and thus lower prices and increase sales. To dispose of his goods at a competitive price the producer must carefully study every factor of production in order to devise means of reducing costs by eliminating wastes. Thus intensive competition has been the chief cause of the introduction of modern efficient methods of merchandising and of reducing methods of manufacture to a scientific basis.

**How Marketing Problems Developed.**—Markets for the sale of goods may be local, national, or international. Where means of transportation exist manufactured goods have usually a country-wide distribution and staple articles a world market. Many commodities which a few years ago were sold only locally have, thanks to the discovery of the refrigerating process and to reductions in the cost of transportation, secured access to national and in some instances to world markets.

Supply and demand are two terms which are constantly applied to the marketing or sale of goods. The *supply of goods* in the market does not mean the total stock in existence, but the amount which is for sale at a given price; the *stock of goods* is the total amount on hand and is usually applied to the stock of a store, a warehouse, or factory. The *demand* on a market means the amount of goods which will be taken at a certain price.

As production increased, competition also increased which greatly affected the disposition and distribution of the larger

amount of goods. The problem of distribution, or sale of goods, is defined by Dr. Paul Nystrom as that of moving goods from where they are to places where they are wanted; of effecting exchange so that those who have merchandise to dispose of and those who desire to acquire merchandise may both be accommodated; and lastly of obtaining goods from the producers and placing them in the hands of consumers.

**Ill Repute of Early Traders.**—Intensive competition as we have seen, led to the production of cheaper and better goods, but the problem of efficient and better distribution has until recently been comparatively neglected. Little or no attention has been paid to improving the methods of selling goods. One reason why the sale of goods has been neglected is that for centuries the retailer or peddler who offered goods for sale was held in ill repute. The Persians, as ancient writers state, regarded all trade as dishonest and a school for liars and rogues. The old Greek word for retail trader meant the same as falsifier. Cicero stated that no one could be successful as a merchant without lying. St. Chrysostom, a Church Father of the Middle Ages, declared that it was hardly possible for a man to be a merchant and also a Christian. The old Italian word *rivenditore* which designated the retailer also has the meanings of covetousness, tendency to cheat, and vileness. During the Middle Ages stringent laws were passed against those who bought in order to sell again. Adam Smith, an English writer at the time of our revolution, says in speaking of the retail merchant, that generally it is in his interest to deceive and even to oppress the public.

**Early Methods of Trading.**—Until about a decade ago economists did not concern themselves with problems of dis-

tribution and exchange and it is only during the past ten years that serious attention has been paid to the marketing of goods and the manner and method of their sale, which constitutes salesmanship. The custom of exchanging or trading in goods did not originate as we might be disposed to think under the family system of production among the members of the same family or clan. The people produced much the same kinds of wares or products and there was little need to exchange them among themselves. Trading was first practiced among peoples and countries far distant from each other. It was international before it became local, and was carried on in ships before it was carried on by means of pack-horses on land. The first merchants or traders were sailors or adventurers such as we read about in the travels of Marco Polo, or in the imaginary journeys of Sinbad the Sailor in the "Arabian Nights." As these adventurers carried on their trading only with strangers and foreigners, it was not surprising that barter was frequently accompanied by fraud, stratagem, and often by violence. For these reasons the trading of goods came into ill repute and this fact explains why Mercury, originally the god of cunning and trickery, came in time to be the patron deity of merchants and trade.

**Growth of the Shop and Store.**—During the feudal age when the articles in daily use were made in the home, there were no shops such as we have them today. The room, or sometimes the outer building where many of the articles were made, was called in England the "shop." The retail store or shop exists today in every civilized land, and in England the store is still called a shop, thus indicating the origin of the word. As men acquired skill in handicraft work, they began to devote their whole time to making one kind of

goods and exchanging what was not needed for other goods. A person owning a surplus of shoes who wanted clothes, searched for somebody who wished to dispose of clothes for shoes, and the exchange was made through barter. The place where the bartering was carried on was an open, central space in or near a village. There on certain days a "market" was held, to which all who wished to dispose of goods came regularly. The word "market" is derived from Mercury, the god of trade.

Those producers who did not care to go to the trouble of seeking purchasers in the market for the goods they had for sale either stored these wares in their shops to await customers or got others to do the marketing for them. Thus one set of persons found it profitable to devote all their time to selling the goods of others, and converted their shops into stores, though they retained the original term "shop." In this way merchants and retailers came into being.

**Growth of the Modern Corporation.**—During the seventeenth century the foreign trade of England greatly expanded. A merchant would buy up a cargo of English goods, send them to a foreign country to exchange for other goods and bring these back to England where they were sold at a profit. To reduce the risks involved in these trading ventures, the merchants combined their goods and resources into "stock companies" or "merchant adventurers' companies," which companies were first organized to finance the fitting out of a number of ships with the necessary cargoes and equipment. A merchant could reduce his trading risks by investing his capital in a number of ships. For more than two hundred years this form of trading organization flourished.

The merchant adventurers' companies were the fore-

## THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MODERN STORE 11

runners of modern corporations, of modern insurance companies and of modern wholesale houses. As their business increased and became more diversified, a distinction arose in the use of the word "merchant." The term "merchant" was restricted to those engaged in foreign trade on a large scale, while those engaged in domestic trade were called "tradesmen" and "shopkeepers." This meaning of the word "merchant" prevails in England today. The merchant adventurers who sent their ships and cargoes to the corners of the earth from the shores of Great Britain, were so successful that England soon surpassed all countries as a trading nation. Yet in spite of their success trade was still looked down upon by the aristocracy and governing classes and Napoleon derisively spoke of England as a "nation of shopkeepers."

**How Modern Trading Began.**—During the latter part of the eighteenth century, discoveries and inventions began to revolutionize methods of production, with the result that it became more economical to make goods in factories rather than in the shops connected with the homes. The busy manufacturer, however, had no time to find a market for his goods and he was either compelled to employ somebody to sell them for him or dispose of them in large lots, at wholesale, to middlemen. Both methods of distribution flourished for years. It was a common sight in England during the early part of the nineteenth century, to see a train of pack animals or of heavy wagons, loaded with cotton and woolen goods, seeking customers. As the goods were sold, raw materials were purchased to be taken back to the factory. To keep a heavy wagon or a train of pack animals waiting while the bargain was made proved inconvenient and time-wasting. Therefore travelers were sent out on horseback or in carriages

with samples, to take orders for goods to be delivered later by wagon. Thus arose the custom of sending out traveling salesmen or commercial travelers.

**Trade Development in America.**—The American colonies followed English methods of trading quite closely. The import merchants were also the wholesalers until American manufactures began to be established on a larger scale shortly after the War of 1812–1814, and even to the time of the Civil War, many wholesalers were also importers. The system of distribution that prevailed in 1860 comprised importers, who sold foreign-made goods; brokers, who devoted their time chiefly to selling the goods of New England textile mills; wholesalers, who either imported their own goods or bought them from importers, brokers, commission men, and sometimes from producers direct; and finally retailers. The retailers or storekeepers usually made two trips a year to the wholesale houses at Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Chicago, Cincinnati, St. Louis, and New Orleans for the purpose of buying their stocks in trade.

**The First Commercial Travelers.**—The custom of those days was to order on six months' credit sufficient goods to last for six months, with the result that losses from bad debts were frequent. The panic of 1837 caused many wholesale houses to fail because of their inability to collect their debts. The experiences of this panic led to more care in the granting of credit and efforts were made to ascertain which customers were in a strong financial position and what were the limits of the credit that could be safely granted in each case. Thus the modern system of "financial rating" began. The first commercial travelers in the United States were sent on the

road by wholesalers to ascertain the financial standing of their retail customers, to collect their bills when due, and to extract a settlement from those who refused to pay their debts.

As these travelers at first did not sell goods, and this method of collecting credit information and accounts as they became due proved expensive, the commercial travelers began to try to book orders for future delivery, and in this way the modern traveling salesman came into being.

After the Civil War the custom of sending out traveling salesmen to solicit trade grew rapidly. The representatives of Chicago wholesalers covered the Western prairies and traveling salesmen with their trunks on wagons followed the trail of the pioneer into the West, far beyond the terminals of railroads and even over the mountains to the Pacific Coast.

**The Mercantile Agencies.**—Shortly after the panic of 1837 a prominent merchant named Church established in New York a bureau of credit information. He collected information about retailers which he furnished to wholesalers upon payment of a small fee. In 1840 he issued the first mercantile reference book, i.e., a book in which the financial rating of merchants and manufacturers was given. The following year the first mercantile agency was established by Lewis Tappan in New York. Woodward and Dusenbury established another in 1842. J. M. Bradstreet founded the Bradstreet Company in 1849. Later the firm of R. G. Dun and Company was established and took over the business of Lewis Tappan. Many other concerns came into existence, and for a period the competition among them was keen. Two of the agencies mentioned survive today and a large part of the business of collecting credit information is still conducted



by the two general mercantile agencies of Bradstreet and Dun.

**The Specialty Store.**—The first bartering center in America was the trading post where goods of various kinds were exchanged with Indians and trappers for furs. The trading post was followed by the typically American "general store," the like of which is found in but few foreign countries. The old-fashioned general store sold dry-goods, hardware, groceries, drugs, and sometimes liquors; it was frequently the location of the post-office as well; and it also served as a social center for the business men of the community. Many examples of the pioneer general store are still to be found today and will continue to exist for years to come.

The specialty or one-line store followed as a natural development of the general store. As the villages increased in size and grew into towns, the demands of the people became more numerous and the variety of goods offered in the general stores failed to satisfy the needs of the buying public. To meet their wants special stores came into existence, each selling one line of goods, particularly dry-goods, drugs, hardware, groceries, or men's furnishings, etc.

**The First Department Store.**—Finally, less than fifty years ago, came the department store. This was a new kind of general store which consisted virtually of several specialty stores conducted under one roof and under one general management. Many department stores trace their origin to successful dry-goods stores which branched out in other lines. The Jordan Marsh Company store of Boston, believed to be the first department store in America, was modeled on

the Bon Marché of Paris, the first and foremost department store in Europe. Shortly after the formation of the Jordan Marsh Company department store others were established in Chicago, Philadelphia, and New York. It is stated that in 1913, there were 1,140 department stores in the United States. Their average sales were then estimated to be \$200,000,000 annually, and fully 40 per cent of the dry-goods and ready-to-wear goods of the country was marketed through these stores.

**Why Salesmanship is Necessary.**—Usually the owner of the village general store served behind the counter and was helped by his wife and children during the busy hours of the day and on Saturdays. As specialty stores came into being and grew in size it became necessary to hire help to run them and to teach this help how to care for the stock, to learn its merits and uses, and how to attend to the wants of customers. There is a right way and a wrong way of doing these things and the study of the right way constitutes the study of salesmanship.

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### Questions

1. What is the starting point of all human activity?
2. When did the merchant begin to play an important rôle in business?
3. In what way does increased competition affect distribution?
4. During antiquity how was the retailer regarded?
5. State the distinction drawn in England between a merchant and a shopkeeper.
6. Describe the system of distribution that prevailed in this country in 1860?
7. What were the early duties of commercial travelers?

8. Describe the evolution of the department store in America.
9. What is a specialty store?
10. What are the characteristic features of the domestic system of production?
11. What is the aim of merchandising?
12. What made the department store possible?
13. What is distribution?
14. Explain the difference between demand and desire.
15. Why was England called by Napoleon a "nation of shopkeepers"?

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## CHAPTER II

### NEED FOR RETAIL SALESMANSHIP

**The Haggling Period of Retailing.**—During the last fifty years, methods of retail selling have been revolutionized. It was formerly the practice to make as much quick profit as possible and give no thought to the satisfaction of the customer with the profit made. All storekeepers were "profit-eers," and the present one-price system was unknown. Goods were marked in a way known only to the seller, and the best salesman was the one who could obtain the highest price. The salesperson expected the customer to object to the price and so he asked more for an article than he expected to receive. The price at which an article was secured depended upon the customer's bargaining powers, and rather than lose a sale goods were often sold at a loss. The next customer, it was hoped, would pay the price asked, and the profit on one transaction would pay for the loss on the other. Two friends or members of the same family might buy an article from the same store on the same day and pay different prices. The buyer who proved most persistent at the higgling and haggling game secured the better bargain.

The custom naturally created dissatisfaction among intelligent buyers but the retail merchant never thought that his prosperity depended upon satisfied customers. An article once bought, the transaction was regarded as closed, and the idea that "a bargain was a bargain" was rigidly followed. If the purchaser found when he examined the article at home that it was defective and not worth the price paid, he had

to accept his bad bargain. The merchant did not consider himself obligated to pay any attention to the protests of the purchaser. If the customer was not shrewd enough to detect flaws and defects which it was his business to discover, he deserved to be cheated.

**The Fixed Price Sales Policy.**—Today this foolish custom has disappeared and the attitude of the merchant toward his customers has changed. One price is made to all for the same class of goods, which price cannot be changed by higgling. Bargaining has no place in any reputable store. Good retailing demands one price strictly adhered to, and if the customer is not satisfied goods are now universally exchanged, or the purchase price is refunded if that is preferred.

This policy—the beginning of modern retailing—was introduced by John Wanamaker more than forty years ago. When, on May 6, 1876, he opened his two-acre store in Philadelphia, his fellow merchants predicted that his new adventure would be a failure under the new methods, which were to be strictly followed. These innovations were as follows:

1. The salespersons were not to importune anyone to buy. This was in direct contrast with the prevailing method of selling a customer something that was not wanted, or more than was wanted, and considering that the larger the sale the better the ability of the salesperson.

2. The prices of goods were marked at the lowest figure they could be sold for, and higgling was abolished. If the goods were wanted the marked price must be paid.

3. The goods were genuinely trustworthy. Seconds were not sold for anything but seconds, even if the customer could not tell the difference.

4. The goods could be returned and the money would be refunded if they failed to please.

**Importance of Satisfying the Customer.**—In the carrying out of these policies service was first given its rightful place in retailing. Salespersons were impressed with the fact that a satisfied customer was a valuable asset to the store. Satisfaction with the service rendered and with the goods supplied was for the first time made the corner-stone of successful retailing. Today the policies first inaugurated in the Wana-maker store dominate the business of retail selling.

A business maxim of Marshall Field, founder of the great Chicago store, was that the customer is always right in any dispute about goods or service. In other words, no store can afford to lose a customer by making him feel that he is in the wrong unless the dispute involves a matter of principle. Most retail merchants today recognize that it always pays to make things right with dissatisfied customers, and that customers should not be importuned to buy, whether they are in the store merely for the purpose of looking at goods or of buying a definite article. The store in which this policy is carried out radiates an atmosphere of cordiality and helpfulness which is in sharp contrast with the cold and indifferent atmosphere that is found in many stores where the clerks make no effort to please customers.

There is a reason for this. If we try to be obliging and accommodating, if there is good cheer in our hearts, if we feel kindly toward everybody, we radiate these qualities and help others to feel as we feel. This makes the store a cheerful and pleasant place to linger in. But where clerks show by their manner that they are indifferent to their customer's likes and dislikes, or where they do their work indifferently with a

bored air as if they are not interested in either the things they sell or the wants of the buyer, this indifference is quickly felt by the customers. People patronize the store where they receive the most obliging and courteous treatment, just as they like to mix with people who will be considerate of their feelings and respect their likes and dislikes. We gravitate toward kindness and good cheer and away from the disagreeable, the repugnant, or the hostile mental attitude of selfishness and indifference. It should be remembered that much of the success of the Marshall Field and John Wanamaker stores has been due to the tens of thousands of patrons who regularly do their shopping in these establishments because they are assured of the courtesy and the friendly attitude of the salespersons who serve them.

**Why Courtesy and Consideration Pay.**—A. T. Stewart owed a great deal of his success to his unvarying principle of employing clerks of pleasing appearance, whose manners were invariably courteous. He knew that the difference between supercilious and indifferent clerks and those who are well-mannered and gentlemanly may make all the difference between the failure or the success of a retail business. The value of this policy is proved by the experience of two parallel railroad lines in the West. The employees of one railroad used to adopt an insolent, "I'm-as-good-as-you" attitude toward travelers. They showed no desire to please and accommodate the public. This spirit was carried so far that the officials of the road in time found that they were losing business. Passengers began to patronize the rival line on which the opposite policy was followed. The employees of this road had been instructed to be as polite and accommodating as possible, and to try in every way to please



passengers. The result was, before many years, that not only passenger but freight traffic shifted to the line with the obliging and accommodating staff.

**Cultivating the Customer's Good-Will.**—Competition for public patronage has become so keen that the good-will of the public is a matter of first importance to retail merchants, who know that they must either win and hold the favor of the buying public or fail. No storekeeper can afford to be curt with his customers, or allow his salespersons to show indifference or discourtesy, as was possible in the days when there was comparatively little competition. Most retail stores sell goods of the same grade at much the same prices. The real competition is in service. How many salespersons realize that the whole structure of retail merchandising rests upon the good-will of customers and that the connecting link between the customer and the store is the salesperson? On this link hangs success or failure. The salesperson can either build business or destroy it. The basic requisite for success is the service of the salesperson.

A merchant may have a store stocked with the best grade of goods, may have the best possible selling equipment, and may be able to sell his goods at the same price as competing stores. But without a sufficient volume of profitable sales his business will fail. The task of bringing customers back to the store and of selling goods to them again and again falls chiefly upon the sales force. The salesperson who can develop business through his or her manner of handling customers is a most valuable asset to any store.

**Definition of Salesmanship.**—The old idea of salesmanship was that it consisted of the ability to sell goods to a

customer who did not need them. This is not salesmanship as it is understood today. Salesmanship has been defined as the ability to influence and persuade people. If we take for granted that a person who is able to convince and persuade others would also be able to sell goods at a profit, that definition is correct so far as it goes. But salesmanship means more than selling goods at a profit. The customer must also be satisfied with the purchase. Salesmanship may therefore be defined as the ability to sell goods at a profit to the mutual benefit of buyer and seller. The buyer benefits from satisfaction in the use of the goods; the seller benefits from the profit not only on the first sale, but on future sales that may result from the satisfaction given by the goods.

**Satisfaction of the Customer—What It Implies.**—The salesperson was formerly taught to believe that a sale was complete as soon as the money was received and the goods delivered to the customer. Even today many persons working behind store counters still hold to this old belief. It should be firmly impressed upon every salesperson that a sale is not complete unless the customer is satisfied. Satisfaction does not begin and end when a customer receives the goods and leaves the store. It is not complete until the goods are worn out or discarded. If at any time during their use they do not perform the work or last as long as they were represented to last, they fail to satisfy the customer. The only remedy for preventing dissatisfaction is to make the matter right. If this is not done the customer will probably buy elsewhere in the future.

A man once bought a rocking-chair from a reliable store in New York City. Six months after the purchase, a slight blow on one of the rockers caused it to break, and on ex-

amination it was found that the break was due to a defect in the wood. The chair was sent back to the store and the merchant promptly returned a new chair in exchange for the broken article. If the matter had not been adjusted in this way the customer would have been dissatisfied and would probably have told his friends about it. The reward to the merchant came when two newly wedded couples, friends of the gratified customer, bought all their furniture at that store.

**Order Taking versus Salesmanship.**—Salespersons may be roughly divided into two distinct classes of employees. One class accepts what business comes, very much as the peddler selling lead pencils on the street corner accepts alms, while the other tries to create business. The first class may be called the order fillers. Members of this class perform their duties like machines. They sell only the goods asked for by the customer, and they know little more than the price about their goods. The thought of interesting a customer in other goods does not occur to them. They never consider whether the services rendered and the goods sold are of a quality to cause customers to return and buy again.

Frank Farrington, one of our prominent retailers, says that if he had a clerk who was nothing more than a machine for taking orders he would discharge him and get a phonograph in his place. Mr. Farrington contends that the fellow who cannot help the business by encouraging people to buy better goods, more profitable goods, or other goods than merely those they come in and ask for is hardly as competent as a phonograph. The machine would record the customers with fewer mistakes than are ordinarily made by the order-taking clerk. The efficient clerks are business builders who study

their customers' requirements in order to ascertain if other goods are wanted. Their business is to sell goods, but they know that a sale is not complete unless the customer is satisfied. Salespersons of this type produce business and are thus valuable assets to any store.

**Instruction in Salesmanship.**—A sale may be made in a number of ways but there is only one efficient way. This way should be ascertained by the merchant and taught definitely to the salespersons. Understanding clearly every step in the process of a sale enables the salesperson to handle customers without any hesitation as to what is to be done next. Salespersons should know the selling points of their goods; they should be able to explain these points in simple, telling language, and they should be able to judge which to use in a given case to rouse a customer's desire to buy.

**Handicaps to Selling.**—In commenting on "Why a Salesman Failed," the *Bankers' and Brokers' Gazette* recently gave the following reasons:

1. He was not neat in his appearance.
2. He lacked dignity in his bearing.
3. He had a conceited and arrogant manner.
4. He did not believe in the goods he was selling.
5. He did not know the fine points of his own goods.
6. He disgusted his customer with gross flattery.
7. He offended the customer by undue familiarity.
8. He made a bitter attack upon his competitor's goods.
9. He openly ridiculed his customer's ideas.
10. He got lost in the forest of details and could not stick to essentials.

11. He talked too much. He gave his customer no chance to explain his needs.
12. He could not answer questions and objections intelligently, concisely, and convincingly.

These reasons for failure are a warning to every salesperson. A careful analysis of self should be made and no time lost in correcting any of the above deficiencies where they exist, because every one of them is a serious handicap to efficient selling. Acquiring such handicaps should be guarded against and good training will prevent their formation or eradicate them when they exist.

**Salesmanship Can Be Taught.**—Salesmanship until recently was looked upon as a gift of nature, and it was thought that only those possessed of this gift could succeed as salespersons. To such a person training was unnecessary. Hugh Chalmers says: "I have had a great deal to do with salesmen. I was a salesman myself for a great many years and I have employed and supervised the work of hundreds of others. There is an old adage which says, 'Salesmen are born and not made.' I do not believe that. I believe that salesmen are made as well as born and teaching will do a great deal to make a salesman."

When merchants believed that salespersons were born and not made, they paid no attention to training. The usual practice was merely to acquaint new salespersons with a few rules concerning the store's routine, and to give them a check-book together with instructions that if they wanted more information they were to ask another clerk. The only method of training available in the old days consisted in the casual observation of others.

But the day of learning by observation is past, and the day of systematic training is at hand. An efficient salesperson is made only through training. Though some learn through experience and their own observation how best to handle customers, few have the ability to develop themselves and become efficient salespersons. Merchants are beginning to realize that selling efficiency is essential to success and that it is costly to leave the training of employees to their own efforts. The training of salespersons in the fundamental principles of their daily work should be one of the aims of the management in every store.

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### Questions

1. In what way have retail selling methods been revolutionized?
2. What new policies in merchandising were introduced by John Wanamaker?
3. What makes a store atmosphere cheerful and uplifting?
4. What attracts the public in shopping?
5. Explain the nature of competition in retail merchandising.
6. Why is the customer a privileged person?
7. What is salesmanship?
8. Name some remedies for preventing dissatisfaction.
9. Mention several reasons why salespersons fail.
10. Why is a careful analysis of self important?
11. Comment upon the old adage, "Salesmen are born and not made."
12. How are efficient salespersons developed?
13. Why does salesmanship require more than the ability to sell goods at a profit?

### Collateral Reading

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## CHAPTER III

### THE HEALTH AND DIET OF THE SALESPERSON

**Service the Watchword of Retailing.**—To succeed, a store must attract and retain customers. The most important problem the merchant has to solve is to bring customers to his store. What makes customers prefer one store to another though both sell the identical goods at the same prices? It is the service offered in the one case and neglected in the other. Service is the watchword of retail merchandising. Its presence spells success, its lack means failure. In the offering of store service the salesperson is the most important factor.

**The Human Element.**—When there is a large margin of profit, and competition is not keen, little attention is paid to the service rendered by the salesperson. But with increasing competition, and with the growing number of stores, customers become more critical, and more independent. Then the human factor in selling, the thing which is often most neglected, becomes all-important. During the nineteenth century manufacturers concentrated their attention on machines and equipment for the purpose of reducing costs. The increased competition of the twentieth century has made them realize that the machine is not the only important factor to consider in the elimination of waste and the lowering of costs. The human factor is equally important. The human heads and hands that attend the machines must be given consideration. In retail merchandising even more than in manufacturing it is the human factor that must be studied



and made more efficient in the performance of its task, if competition is to be successfully met.

**Three Aspects of Salesmanship.**—The advancement of every person who enters a business of any kind depends first of all upon his knowledge of that business and the goods or service it offers to the public. This is the foundation on which he must build and on which his ladder to higher positions must rest. To climb the ladder each one must study himself, striving to eradicate weaknesses and to strengthen to the best of his ability any natural talent or bent he may possess. He must also study human nature so as to learn how to influence others and make himself agreeable to them. Self-training and self-development of this kind are necessary for success in any business but perhaps in no other business career are they quite so essential as in the career of the salesperson.

Thus the training of the salesperson may be conveniently divided and discussed under the three aspects of:

1. Study of self
2. Study of the goods and customer
3. Study of store methods, systems, and organization

Self-respect compels us to give thought to our appearance and manners and to make as good and pleasing an impression upon others as we can. Salespersons come into contact with a number of customers daily and most of these customers carry away with them a distinct impression of the kind or type of person who has waited upon them. Therefore, the first matter to which salespersons should pay attention is the effect of their personality upon others. By personality is meant the impression made by one's appearance,

one's manner of address, and one's mental alertness and character as a whole. A personality which is otherwise pleasing may be marred by a slovenly, ill-kempt, or overdressed appearance, or by lack of manners and ordinary politeness, or by crudities and errors in speech. Nobody can afford to neglect these matters—least of all, those engaged in selling. For this reason the chapters which follow are devoted to the consideration of those things which go to make up a pleasing personality. After these more general matters have been cleared away other phases of study which are more or less peculiar to salesmanship will be taken up.

**Fundamental Requirements—Good Health.**—The fundamental requirements, if a salesperson is to be really efficient, are good health and good appearance. Personal efficiency is not possible without a clear, alert brain. But a clear brain is not possible without a sound body. E. F. Fowler, a prominent retail merchant, in giving advice to a gathering of salespersons said "No one cares to hire an unwholesome-looking person and few customers care to be served by one. If you are endowed with health, for heaven's sake keep it! If you are not, then get it!" The human body is a tool, and all persons, including salespersons, should realize the elementary and obvious truth that the quality of the work we do suffers when our health suffers.

Mental health depends upon bodily health. The dependence of mind upon body is seen in the effect of abuses of the appetite. To eat too much, too frequently, or too rapidly, to eat improperly cooked food, or too many sweets, to eat when tired, tends to interfere with digestion and thus affects our mental health. Interference with any part of the circulation of the blood or failure to breathe an adequate quantity

of fresh air affects the health of the body, and in so far as bodily health suffers so is mental action affected. The mind and the body are one. If the body is ill, the mind will be impaired. Every sensible person, including salespersons, should obey the first law of bodily and mental health: "Acquire sensible, wholesome habits."

**Control of the Body.**—Bodily health depends upon mental control. The control and care of the body are primarily mental affairs. The use or abuse of the body in eating or working is governed by our sensations, impulses, will, and intelligence. A man builds a house which becomes a means of protection and a source of comfort for him. The house would not have been built or kept in repair except for his interests and his efforts. So the development of the organism takes place in response to the desires and will of the mind and is largely under its own control. Proof of the dependence of the body upon the mind is found in the fact that the body cannot develop without use, whether in work or in play, and it is the mind or will that puts it to use. The body is thus under the control of the intelligence and will. Every sensible person realizes that health and wholesomeness are simple matters of will directed by common-sense intelligence.

**Nourishment of the Body.**—The human body may be likened to an engine and food to the fuel of the furnace. The lungs are the bellows which bring oxygen to the fuel so that it may burn and produce heat or energy. The pores of the skin, the kidneys, the lungs, and the bowels are agencies for removing the clinkers in the form of waste products. As it is necessary for the steamer or locomotive to be supplied with proper fuel, so must the human body be supplied with proper

food. This does not mean that it is necessary to know a great deal about food values and the best advice about the matter is to:

1. Beware of fads.
2. Eat plenty of wholesome food.
3. Chew it to a pulp.
4. Use judgment.

Food is required to replace the cells and tissues of the body and to furnish heat and energy. The term "food" includes everything that is consumed for the purpose of nourishing the body or supplying it with heat and energy. The five chief kinds of nutrients are mineral salts, water, proteids, fats, and carbohydrates. All these substances, excepting carbohydrates and fats, are absolutely necessary to maintain the body in health.

**The Constituents of Food.**—Mineral salts and water are necessary for the proper nourishment of the body. A little common salt is found in all meat. The salts of potash, lime, and iron are present in many vegetables and fruits. Lime salts are necessary to build the bones. Iron salts are needed to form an important part of the red blood corpuscles.

The proteid part of food keeps the tissues of the body in repair. The white of an egg is composed of water and albumen which is one of the commonest forms of proteid. Lean beef is composed almost entirely of proteids and water. Skim milk cheese consists of about one-third proteid and two-thirds water. If more proteid is eaten than is necessary to rebuild the worn-out tissues it may be transformed into fat.

Carbohydrates furnish most of the energy of the body and

some of its heat. Starch, which is found in abundant quantities in most vegetable food, is the source from which the body derives nearly all its carbohydrate materials. Sugar and starch are pure carbohydrates. More than half of wheat bread, dried peas, beans, and corn and more than three-fourths of wheat flour and rice consist of carbohydrates. Meat contains almost no carbohydrates and eggs none whatever. When eaten in large quantities, carbohydrates tend to make a person fat.

Fat is present in most animal foods. Butter is the kind of fat found in milk. Cream cheese is about one-third fat and eggs about one-eighth. Fats are extracted from plants in the form of oil, as cotton-seed oil. A little fat is present in most vegetable foods. The eating of more fat than the body needs may cause one to become fat.

Pepper, salt, vanilla, vinegar, and mustard are condiments or flavors. They are generally added to food for the purpose of making it more appetizing. Their pleasant odors and spicy taste increase the flow of the digestive juices and thus aid digestion. The abuse of condiments, however, especially pepper, vinegar, and mustard, may injure the health of the stomach and thus of the body as a whole.

**The Fuel Value of Food.**—Fuel value is reckoned in heat units or calories. Experiments show that food burned outside the body gives off the same quantity of heat as when oxidized or burned by the living cells in the body. It has been proved by experiment that the daily food of the average person should contain one-eighth of a pound of pure proteid, and fats, and starches to furnish a fuel value of three thousand calories. To select proper food it is necessary to know the food value of the common articles of diet.

Many people eat too much, and too many calories; others eat too little, and too few calories. Some foods contain many calories in a small bulk while others contain comparatively few calories. A third of an ounce of olive oil contains 100 calories which is as many as are contained in a pound or more of tomatoes, lettuce, celery, cucumbers, string beans, asparagus, or watermelon. Professor Irving Fisher, of Yale University, is the authority for the following list of food values.

There are 100 calories contained in the following:

- A small lamb chop (weighing about 1 oz.)
- A large egg
- A small dish of baked beans (about 3 oz.)
- 1½ cubic inches of cheese (about 1 oz.)
- An ordinary dish of corn (about 3½ oz.)
- A large-sized potato (baked, about 3 oz.)
- An ordinary thick slice of bread (about 1 oz.) ✓
- A very large dish of oatmeal (about 6 oz.) ✓
- A small piece of sponge cake (about 1 oz.)
- ⅓ of an ordinary piece of pie (about 1½ oz.) ✓ ✓ ✓
- Three teaspoonfuls of sugar (about 1 oz.) ✓ ✓
- One dozen peanuts (about ⅔ of an oz.)
- Eight pecans (about ½ oz.)
- Four prunes (about 1 oz.) ✓
- Two apples (about 7 oz.)
- One large banana (about 4 oz.)
- Seven olives (about 1½ oz.)
- One large orange (about 10 oz.)
- An ordinary pat of butter (about ½ an oz.) ✓
- ¼ glass of cream (about 2 oz.)
- 1 small glass of milk (about 5 oz.)

**Advantages of a Mixed Diet.**—The body, as we have seen, needs a certain amount of protein. Foods should be so selected as to give the right amount of protein or repair foods,

and of fats and carbohydrates or fuel foods. According to investigation, protein should constitute about 10 per cent of the total number of heat units consumed, i.e., 10 calories of protein out of every 100 calories of food. A serious error of diet made by the average person is that of eating too much protein, by too liberal a consumption of meat, eggs, fowl, cheese, peas, and beans. When protein is taken in greater quantity than the body needs, added work is given the liver and kidneys, the circulation is over-stimulated and disease may result. Instead of 10 calories out of every 100 many use 20 or 30, more than double the quantity known to be ample.

The most economical diet for the body is a mixed diet partly of cereal foods, partly of vegetables, and a little meat. A diet chiefly of meat would contain a large excess of protein which would necessitate the elimination of a large amount of nitrogenous waste from the body. A diet composed wholly of bread and butter would exceed the fuel requirements of the body and make a person sleep heavily and feel tired. A diet composed exclusively of vegetables would be bulky and weakening. Experiment proves that the digestive apparatus—and thus the whole body—does more efficient work on a mixed diet. When a meal is composed of only one sort of food it is not completely digested and absorbed into the blood, but it is partly passed out as waste from the intestines, whereas a meal of mixed food is almost all completely utilized. Unless some starch is present in the food, the saliva has no digestive function, but simply lubricates the morsels so that they slip easily down the gullet. Unless some protein is eaten, the gastric juice cannot do its digestive work. Unless some fat is eaten, the bile is of no service in digestion. Thus the best diet is a combination in which proteins, fats, and

starches are all represented. Sugar should also be included on account of the ease with which it is digested.

**The Saliva and Digestion.**—The flow of saliva in the mouth is of great assistance in moistening the food while we chew it, but its function goes further than this. Some of the saliva is swallowed before we begin to eat, and this brings word to the juices of the stomach to get ready for work. As the food approaches the mouth this message to the stomach causes it to set to work pouring out the digestive juices. Saliva is poured from the pouches of the cheeks and from under the tongue by living sponges or juice factories, called salivary glands. The juices of these glands are either acid or alkaline. By acid we mean sour or sharp, like the taste of a lemon or carbonic acid, the bubbles of which give the tang to plain soda water. By alkaline we mean "soap-like" or flat in their taste, as vegetables, or lime and soaps of all sorts. If you pour an acid and an alkali together such as vinegar and soda they will "fizz" or effervesce until they neutralize each other.

The chief purpose of digestion is to prepare the food so that it will dissolve in water, to be taken up by the cells lining the food tube. Saliva, like the rest of the body juices, consists chiefly of water. Nothing is more disagreeable than to try to chew dry food such as a large crisp soda cracker, which requires more moisture than the salivary glands are able to supply. You soon begin to feel as if you would choke unless you drink some water. But it is not advisable to take this short cut to relief because the saliva contains what the water does not—a ferment or digestive substance which possesses the power of turning the starch in our food into sugar. As starch is only slowly soluble in water and sugar is very readily



so, the saliva is of great assistance in the process of digestion. The changing of the starch to sugar is the reason why a cracker after it has been well chewed begins to taste sweetish.

**The Function of the Pancreatic Juice.**—The change in the mouth, however, is not of such great importance as scientists at one time thought, because even with careful mastication a certain amount of starch is swallowed unchanged. Nature has provided another gland farther down the alimentary canal, just beyond the stomach. This gland, called the pancreas, pours into the food tube a juice which is far stronger in sugar making than saliva and which readily deals with any starch that may have escaped the change in the mouth. Moreover this "sugaring" of starch goes on in the stomach for twenty to forty minutes after the food has been swallowed.

**The Importance of Mastication.**—The first important matter connected with eating is mastication. The purpose of mastication is two-fold: first, to break up the food so that the digestive juices may act upon it readily; and secondly, to mix it with the saliva of the mouth. Food that is bolted is likely to ferment in the stomach. Food that is not well mixed with saliva is hard to digest, for saliva is an alkaline substance which stimulates the flow of the stomach acid juices and is intended to help them in their work. Many persons acquire the bad habit of dosing themselves with medicines in order to stimulate the secretion of gastric juice. The natural remedy for faulty digestion, and one that is often sufficient, is simply to chew the food more slowly. This increases the amount of saliva that is mixed with it. Or a dry cracker eaten very slowly twenty minutes before meals may

prove better than medicine. No water should be taken with it and the cracker should be thoroughly chewed. The saliva that is passed into the stomach by this means starts the gastric juices flowing, and by the time the meal comes the stomach is ready for it.

**Drinking at Meals.**—Caution should be exercised in drinking water at meals. Many persons drink water simply to wash down their solid food. This is a bad habit and invariably leads to serious indigestion. It cuts off the secretion of saliva and the stomach juices lack their normal stimulus. If the water is cold, moreover, the work of the alimentary canal is interrupted, and the stomach is unable to carry on its work until the regular temperature has been restored. The moderate use of water at moderate temperature does no harm providing it is not used to wash down solids which have not been properly mixed with saliva.

**The Rôle of Cooking in Digestion.**—Cooking plays an important role in making food easily digestible. Only food that is properly cooked should be eaten. Cooking is advantageous in three ways:

1. Food tastes better.
2. It is softened and more easily masticated.
3. It is sterilized.

To change the taste of food by cooking may not seem of sufficient importance to justify the expense and trouble of the process. Yet this is one of the main reasons why cooking came into use and is still one of the important reasons for continuing it. Any food to be thoroughly good food must "taste good," otherwise it will not be properly digested, and

will sooner or later upset the stomach and destroy the appetite. The second important use of cooking is that it makes food both easier to masticate and easier to digest. It bursts the little coverings of the starchy grains, and makes the tough fibers of grains and roots crisp and brittle, as is well illustrated in the soft, mealy texture of a cooked potato and in the crispness of parched corn. Cooking coagulates or curdles the jelly-like pulp of meat and the sticky gluten of wheat so that they can be ground into tiny pieces between the teeth. We could not eat the different kinds of grains and flours in proper amounts for our nourishment unless they were cooked.

A third and probably the most important advantage of cooking is that it sterilizes the food and kills any germs or animal parasites which may be therein. Care in the cooking, preparing, and serving of food is thus a preventive of sickness and a preservative of health.

**How Much Water to Drink.**—After air, water is the most important of all substances necessary to human life. The body daily loses water through excretion, evaporation, and perspiration. Water is also needed to carry the waste substances from the different organs and tissues to the liver, the kidneys, the lungs, and the skin. The body should be kept well flushed with water, both for health and for comfort. During the summer an abundant supply of water is needed to keep the body from becoming overheated. The perspiration of the skin cools us by evaporation. A well-known authority states that men in fairly good condition, if they are at rest and have plenty of water to drink, can survive without food for from two to four weeks, but if deprived of water they perish in agony in from two to three days. Al-

though all foods, either as found in a state of nature, or as they come on the table cooked and prepared for eating, contain quantities of water, this is not enough for the needs of our bodies. The average person does not drink sufficient water for the healthful action of the different organs of the body. The plentiful use of good, pure drinking water is one of the essentials for health and should never be neglected.

**Effect of Exhaustion on Digestion.**—Food should never be eaten while one is exhausted either physically or mentally, or while worried or angry. An exhausted, worried, or angry person's stomach cannot properly digest food. One who is exhausted should rest before eating; one who is worried or angry should recover serenity. During meals there should be relaxation, composure, and cheerfulness; then the food is enjoyed and the stomach is in the mood for proper digestion. After a meal, no hard physical or mental work should be done for a time. At the beginning of the process of digestion the stomach needs a large supply of blood, and hard work of any kind interferes with the digestive processes.

**The Cure of Constipation.**—Constipation should not be treated by the common method of swallowing salts, the effect of which is to flood the food tube with water and sluice it clean of both poisons and food, leaving it in an exhausted condition; nor by taking an irritating cathartic, generally in the form of pills which set up a violent action of the muscles of the food tube, driving its contents through at headlong speed; nor yet by washing out the lower two or three feet of the bowel with injections of water; although any or all of these measures may be resorted to occasionally for temporary relief. A large portion of the food eaten is sucked out

of the food tube into the blood vessels, passes through a large area of the body and is poured out again as waste through the glands of the lining of the lower third of the bowel. Constipation, therefore, is caused by disturbances which interfere with these bodily processes, and its cause is not confined only to the state of the stomach and bowels. The only permanent cure for constipation is exercise in the open air, sleeping in properly ventilated bedrooms, and an abundance of nourishing foods, including plenty of green vegetables and fresh fruits.

**Summary of Rules of Health.**—If the following simple rules of living are followed by every salesperson, they will prove of valuable assistance in keeping healthy and strong:

1. Eat simple foods not in excess, and of fair variety. Salespersons cannot retain their best health and vigor while eating meat three times a day or rich fatty foods continually.

2. Eat slowly and masticate the food thoroughly.

3. Avoid overeating.

4. Drink plenty of fresh, pure water and whenever it is wanted. Drinking pure water never causes injury unless the water is too cold.

5. Wear loose, light, warm, porous, and clean clothing.

6. Keep the skin clean and the pores open. Bathe every day if possible.

7. Sleep eight hours every night and out on a sleeping porch. If impossible to sleep out have windows open so as to assure an abundance of fresh air. Every salesperson should be in bed at ten and up at six. These are the best hours for sleeping.

8. Take some exercise regularly but moderately in the open air every day.

9. Stand, sit, and walk erect.
10. Do not allow poisons and infections to enter the body.
11. Suppress all tendencies toward passions such as anger, hate, and fear. These, with worry, are certain causes of lower vitality and sickness. Do the best that is possible for today and let no troubles of tomorrow cause worry.
12. Keep the teeth and gums clean.
13. Keep serene.
14. Insist on having fresh air not only in your bedroom but in your living-rooms. Fresh air is a good preventive of colds and tuberculosis.
15. Abstain from alcoholic drinks and tobacco. Neither will help the ability of any salesperson to sell. The salesperson whose manner of living cuts down the energy available for selling is closing the door to opportunity.

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### Questions

1. What will make customers pass one store to go to another to get the identical goods at the same prices?
2. Why is service the watchword of retail merchandising?
3. Describe the three factors in every sale.
4. What are the requisites for mental health? What is its need?
5. What is the relation between mental and bodily health?
6. Name the five chief kinds of foods.
7. State the needs of a proper diet.
8. What is the two-fold purpose of mastication?
9. What caution should be exercised in drinking water at meals?
10. Why should food not be taken when a person is exhausted either physically or mentally?
11. Why is the salesperson the most important factor in business building?
12. Give the requisites for a clear brain.

**13.** How is the body dependent for its development upon the mind?

**14.** Why is the task of the salesman largely a mental one?

**15.** Why should every salesperson obey the first law of mental health: "Keep the body in good repair"?

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## CHAPTER IV

### CARE OF THE PERSON

**The Importance of Personal Hygiene.**—The aim of every person should be to attain the highest possible efficiency, for which aim physical fitness is absolutely essential. An important factor in developing and maintaining personal fitness is the care of the person. Special attention should be given to the health of the skin, hair, teeth, hands, feet, and to the style of dress as they play a very important part in the first impression made on the customer. Many salespersons, like many other people, are indifferent about these important personal details and yet they expect to be successful behind the counter. It is the duty of salespersons to study how to take proper care of the person and then to put into practice this natural hygiene.

**The Function and Care of the Skin.**—Perspiration is looked upon by many salespersons as a disagreeable necessity. They do not realize that this function assists in carrying away the poisons of the body and helps to maintain health. Minute sweat glands are situated in the deep layers of the skin from which little tubes or pores run to the surface. These pores carry the water of the blood and also a little salt and waste material to the surface of the skin where they form the sweat or perspiration. Thus the function of sweating is not mainly to remove waste matter from the body but to cool the surface by its evaporation. Much more effective than either radiation or conduction, as a means of rapidly relieving the body of surplus heat, is the evaporation of



perspiration. This is the only means by which the body can remain cooler than the surrounding air when the temperature of the air is higher than the temperature of the blood.

As the evaporation of perspiration leaves the waste matter on the surface of the skin and as the skin is also covered with a scaly layer and a coating of fatty matter which are being constantly thrown off and renewed, it is absolutely necessary that these substances be promptly removed, particularly in warm weather, before they decompose and become offensive. No covering of clothing, powder, or perfume will mask the disagreeable odor of decomposition, and no salesperson should wait on customers while the body is in this offensive state. To prevent this unpleasant condition a daily bath is desirable, particularly in warm weather. The skin is then more active, the amount of excretion is greatly increased, and decomposition takes place more rapidly.

Moreover, if the skin is not carefully cleansed it will not function properly. Such a condition of the skin will cause an unsightly complexion, and a face covered with pimples or blotches is repellent. In such a case a physician should be consulted and the disfigurement can usually be removed by a prescription and a little advice as to proper habits of eating and living. A clean, clear skin is an important asset to every person and is one of the results of good health and proper living. The use of powder or rouge not only detracts from the personal appearance of saleswomen but also clogs the pores of the skin and gradually leads to disfigurement. On the other hand, the salesman should take particular pains to be clean-shaven at all times.

**The Importance of a Daily Bath.**—When in good health the best kind of bath is a warm shower of short duration,

followed by a cold shower for the fraction of a minute. When the surface of the body is first warmed, the cold shower produces less of a shock. The cold shower alone is not so agreeable and certainly not so pleasant and stimulating as the combined shower. The bath should be taken upon rising in the morning and should be followed by a brisk rub with a coarse towel. Turkish or Russian baths are not required to maintain a healthy condition of the skin. They are taken for their agreeable effects, and in some instances for their remedial action in certain conditions of disease. A bath should not be taken within two or three hours after a meal for the reason that if the surface of the body is subjected to extremes of temperature after digestion has begun, the circulation of the blood in the alimentary tract is affected, sometimes with disagreeable results.

**Care of the Teeth.**—The care of the teeth is an important detail in the preservation of health. Apart from the unpleasant odor and appearance associated with decay, imperfect teeth will sooner or later lead to impaired digestion. Decay of the teeth is usually if not always due to the action of bacteria which produce acids in the fermenting of the food particles in the mouth. These acids dissolve the lime salts of the enamel and the dentine. The action of bacteria upon the enamel is favored by the formation of a hard deposit known as tartar, which is a mixture of lime salts precipitated from the saliva, and is deposited upon the teeth usually near the gums. Tartar is difficult to remove by the use of brush and paste. For this reason, a dentist should be visited at least once a year, the tartar removed, and the teeth examined and polished.

The best means of preserving the teeth is by their careful

cleansing. For this purpose the frequent use of the tooth-brush is indispensable. The bristles should not be too close together, so that they may pass readily between the teeth. Great care should be taken not to allow the bristles to spread, and the brush should be discarded before it becomes soft from long use. The brush should not be too broad, and the handle should be bent in the direction of the tuft on the brush, so as to reach more easily the curved surfaces of the teeth. The brushing, which should be practiced after each meal and before going to bed, should be accompanied by the use of a tooth-powder coarse enough to produce a grinding and polishing effect.

**Care of the Scalp.**—Though the scalp does not perspire so freely as the rest of the skin of the body yet a considerable amount of oily waste exudes upon it, while its surface scales off in exactly the same way as does the rest of the skin. If this accumulation of tiny scales and grease is not properly brushed out, it forms a seed-bed for some of the milder kinds of germs that attack the skin. It is highly important to keep the scalp perfectly clean and free from dandruff, and to attain this end daily brushing of the hair and frequent shampooing are necessary.

The hair should be brushed morning and night for several minutes until there is a feeling of warmth in the scalp and all particles of dandruff are removed. Brushes should never be so stiff nor the brushing so vigorous as to produce soreness of the scalp. Wire brushes should not be used as the wires scratch and irritate the delicate scalp and do more harm than good. Brushes should be frequently washed in water containing a little ammonia and then dried in the sun with the bristles down. Combs are chiefly useful in disentangling

snarls and dressing the hair and may be employed daily with the brush. The teeth of the comb should be wide apart, have blunt ends, and be free from any irregularities which might tear the hair. In no case should the old-fashioned, fine-toothed comb be used, as this pulls out the strong hairs especially if the growth is luxuriant, and the fine points may set up an irritation of the scalp and produce a diseased condition.

Many persons are afraid that any considerable amount of brushing and combing will cause a serious loss of hair. Its effect, however, is just the opposite. Brushing increases the growth of the hair by stimulating the circulation of the scalp and by removing dandruff. It removes loose hairs which are ready to fall; but their places are soon taken by a new and more vigorous growth. If the brushing of the hair is done thoroughly, and the head washed with soap and water about once a week for short hair, and once a month for long hair, most of the dangers of dandruff and of other infections of the scalp will be avoided. Wetting the hair for the purpose of "slicking" it or combing it is an injurious practice. The moisture sets up a sort of rancid fermentation in the natural oil of the scalp, causes the hair to smell sour, and furnishes a splendid soil for germs. There is no objection to the wetting of the hair in cold water provided it is rubbed thoroughly dry afterward, and given a brisk brushing. Hair oils and greases are unnecessary and should not be used. Salespersons should not neglect to take proper care of the hair, because a head of finely kept hair adds to the appearance of either salesman or saleswoman. The hair should be carefully combed and not dressed in any freakish or unusual way so as to attract undue attention. Fancy combs and hairpins should not be used as they detract from the appearance

**Care of the Feet.**—The feet demand just as intelligent care as any other part of the body, and their health is especially important to salespersons who are standing or walking most of the day. A healthful condition of the feet is closely connected with a sound condition of body, nerves, and brain. Fatigue and nervousness are more often due to tired, aching feet than to any other cause. Shoes should be strong and comfortable as thin-soled shoes do not afford sufficient protection to the feet of the person who walks a good deal. The salesperson should wear shoes that fit and that do not tire the feet. Tight shoes and stockings hinder the circulation of the blood, and crowd the joints and muscles so closely together that the nervous system suffers a strain. Heels too high or too low may weaken the feet; pointed toes and narrow lasts are responsible for corns and bunions; and the condition known as "flat-foot" or broken arch is due often to the wearing of shoes that do not fit. High heels under the arch of the foot throw the body into such an unnatural position when walking or standing that other muscles and organs besides the feet are seriously affected. In fact, if the feet are to be kept normal special exercises and artificial helps are necessary. The practice for a few minutes each morning of rising on the toes and leaning the body's weight toward the outer edges of the soles has been suggested by foot specialists as a cure and as a prevention of flat-foot. Salespersons suffering from corns, enlarged joints, bunions, and serious cases of flat-foot need special shoes to correct these evils.

**Care of the Hands.**—The care of the hands is a detail to which special attention should be given, because the hands are brought noticeably into use when selling. Well-kept

hands add greatly to a person's appearance. They should be neatly manicured and kept clean and when used should give an impression of skill. The way in which salespersons or mechanics use their hands is a matter of practice and habit, like the facial expression we habitually wear. Even if the hands are naturally clumsy they may be trained in dexterity and grace. Their form and size are not especially important if they are used with no indication of awkwardness. If the hands are trained to be deft, a salesperson will not be conscious of them and they will not attract unfavorable notice from the customer. Moreover rings or bracelets should not be worn.

**The Harm of Tight Clothing.**—One of the frequent causes for indigestion is poor circulation of the blood due to tight clothes. When the circulation is restricted in this way the free action of the muscle of the diaphragm beneath the lungs is hampered. The function of this muscle is to compress the walls of the stomach during digestion, thus kneading and churning its food contents. Saleswomen do not readily admit that their clothes are too tight; but they should realize that tight clothes hamper digestion and are injurious to health. Clothing, to be hygienic, should be loose and porous so that there is free access of the air to the skin.

**The Necessity for Sleep.**—Sleep is the natural means of rest for the mind as well as for the body. The average person requires eight hours sleep, and this should be made the rule whenever possible. No healthy, normal person should have any difficulty in falling asleep unless ill-health or some temporary worry or excitement prevents it. If insomnia exists, its cause should be ascertained and removed, as sleeplessness

is destructive to all mental and physical efficiency. Nothing is more injurious than to resort to drugs as a cure for insomnia. Such a practice is likely to weaken the heart and depress the nervous system. Moreover, the use of drugs for this purpose is apt to lead to the formation of a dangerous habit. A salesperson who suffers from insomnia for any length of time is not in normal health and should consult a physician. As the heart and lungs are less active during sleep than during waking hours it is essential that the air breathed during sleep should be as fresh as possible.

**Sleep and Fatigue.**—The body during sleep throws off the toxic impurities accumulated during the day. Every movement of a muscle, indeed every thought, causes oxidation of tissue and the casting off of toxic impurities into the blood. When these impurities accumulate to a large amount they injure the organism like any other poison. The body purges itself of its toxic impurities during repose. Normally they are burned up by oxygen brought from the blood, excreted by the kidneys, destroyed by the liver, or cast off from the body through the lungs. Rest banishes the sensation of fatigue if the accumulated bodily impurities are cast off; and so sound sleep is the best antidote to fatigue. To come to work in the morning with a tired feeling is a sure handicap to doing a good day's work. The best recipe for a vigorous body and an alert mind is plenty of sleep. Free ventilation and a bountiful supply of oxygen during sleeping hours are of first importance. Outside air, particularly when cold, is richer in oxygen than the air within the house. A sleeping porch is the ideal sleeping place. If this is unavailable a person should sleep with windows open during all seasons of the year.

**Equipment of the Bed.**—A word may be said concerning the equipment of the bed. A reasonably hard mattress is best; nobody should sleep on a feather bed. During sleep the pressure of blood in the brain is diminished and this organ is then at rest. The elevation of the head a little higher than the rest of the body is an aid to sleep and accordingly pillows are used.

**Work and Recreation.**—Play is as necessary to health as work, and every organism needs time for relaxation. It is the recreating period when the effects of work are thrown off and the energy is renewed for the morrow. Play and laughter are to the brain and body what a laxative is to the intestinal tract—a mental and psychical purge. Laughter causes a rapid movement of all the breathing muscles and organs, and is a tonic to the whole system.

Salespersons, like other wayward mortals, are guilty of doing many things that sap their vitality and thus impair their efficiency. Every sensible person should from time to time take stock of himself and his habits and eliminate what he knows to be injurious.

**Avoid Vitality Sappers.**—To make the most of life all persons must learn “to be good to themselves,” that is, while they should do their best to develop themselves to the utmost, they must remember that success depends very largely upon the care they take of the body. Many people are their own worst enemies, and would not think of abusing a dog or any other dumb animal as they do themselves. They go without eating, are irregular at meals, and rob themselves of sleep and recreation; in fact, they violate every law of physical and mental fitness, and yet wonder why they are so



frequently sick and ailing. No good mechanic would for a moment think of using tools that are out of order. Imagine a barber trying to run a first-class shop with dull razors! Yet how many salespersons and business men report for duty with dull brains, tired bodies, haggard faces, and dyspeptic stomachs? Thousands of well-meaning persons who are forced to spend carefully deprive themselves of needed nourishment by trying to economize. They stand at a lunch-counter and hastily swallow a doughnut and a cup of coffee, thinking to economize time and money, when they owe it to themselves to go to a good restaurant and take time enough to eat a properly cooked meal and to allow the stomach to begin the process of assimilation before resuming work.

Much energy is wasted in fretting, worrying, grumbling, faultfinding, and in the little frictions and annoyances that accomplish nothing. Such trivial wastes of energy merely make a person irritable and hard to get on with. They are the "vitality sappers" which hamper and hold back. Do not permit yourself to acquire habits which sap your vitality and drain off your life forces. You should take special care to avoid anything which tends to lessen your energy and thus interfere with your chances of advancement and success in life.

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### Questions

1. What is the first factor in developing physical fitness?
2. Describe the beneficial effects from sweating.
3. What is the best kind of bath to take?
4. What ill effects arise from neglect of the teeth?
5. How should teeth be cared for?
6. What causes dandruff?

7. What care should be taken of the hair and of the scalp?
8. What ill effects arise from not taking proper care of the feet?
9. Describe the effects of tight clothing upon health.
10. What does hygiene of clothing demand?
11. What is the relation between sleep and selling efficiency?
12. Why is a fatigued body a handicap to selling?
13. What are the antidotes to fatigue?
14. What is the importance of play?
15. Mention several vitality sappers.

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## CHAPTER V

### DEVELOPMENT OF PERSONALITY

**Definition of Personality.**—The term personality is difficult to analyze and define. It implies the possession of certain qualities which enable one person to win out, when another who is deficient in them fails. Personality is more than character. It is character forcefully expressed. A person may have character without personality; but it is impossible to have personality without character. Personality may be defined as the power possessed by persons to attract others. The ability to attract people is the climax of personal power.

A few months ago the board of directors of a prominent New York bank chose a young man from a neighboring city as president. When the chairman was asked why this young man had been selected, personality was the first word that fell from the financier's lips. The quality of personality is not a natural gift, but it may be acquired. Alexander H. Revel, one of Chicago's greatest merchants, says that he believes personality is largely a matter of cultivation. To acquire the personality that wins, that marks a person out, and that makes the favorable impression should be the ambition of every salesperson.

**Health and Personality.**—Personality is composed of physical, mental, and moral attributes. The first consideration in developing personality should be its physical side, as health is a necessary factor. It is impossible for anyone to

develop a strong, winning, and magnetic personality without health as a corner-stone.

Exercise is one of the prerequisites for health. Exercise makes the muscles strong, quickens the flow of blood, improves the digestion, and builds up the general health. One should exercise the body every day. Yet as injury may result from overeating, so the body may be injured by taking too much or too violent exercise, or by taking it at the wrong time. Strenuous exercising immediately before eating is harmful, and it is necessary to rest a short while after eating, or the digestive organs will be deprived of the blood they ought to have. Moreover, exercise should be taken regularly. A reasonable amount every day is far better than a large amount one day and none the next.

**Health and Exercise.**—Salespersons and others engaged in business, usually have not the time to keep themselves in perfect physical condition. To do so would take up practically the whole day. A question for each individual to determine is the amount of exercise required to keep the body reasonably fit and healthy. Nobody can think and act energetically unless the nerves and muscles are in good order. Enough exercise is necessary, therefore, to keep the muscles of the body firm and the nervous system in good condition. Hardly anyone enjoys exercise purely as exercise. There is little use, therefore, in recommending an elaborate system of home gymnastics. Many start out with good resolutions, but few keep up such a system for any length of time; they are pretty certain to lose interest. Moreover when we take exercise because we think it a duty, nearly all its benefits are lost. Exercise is of most value when it acts as a tonic to both muscles and mind, that is, when we like it for its own sake, and it has the fun of a game.

**The Kind of Exercise.**—Exercise should not be too severe; that is to say, it should not impose an unusual strain upon the body. Tennis is too strenuous a game for many people as it is too much like real work. Persons of nervous, excitable temperament find that it wears them out instead of resting them. Golf is splendid recreation. The walking, the bending, and the hill climbing are all admirable exercises. Rowing, paddling, bowling, tramping, or any form of exertion that appeals to a man's interest and enthusiasm are good for him. It is possible, however, to keep well without taking any formal exercise, by choosing proper food, eating properly, keeping the skin in good order, and taking a proper amount of mental relaxation. In this way one can often go a long time without any special exercise.

**Minimum Amount of Exercise.**—Anybody who works in a badly ventilated office or store, and has a tendency to worry, to constipation, or to suffer from headaches should take daily exercise. For the average sedentary worker such as a salesperson, the following program of exercise is probably the minimum requirement for health:

1. Spend four minutes each day in purely muscular exercise, such as can be taken in one's room without any special apparatus.
2. Once or twice daily, walk briskly and breathe deeply in the fresh air. This may be done in the morning, at the lunch hour, or in the evening. It is splendid exercise for the heart, lungs, and digestion.
3. Spend Sunday in the open air when possible.

**Personality and Carriage.**—Personality is expressed in the way a person carries himself and holds himself. The

majority of persons hold themselves in a slovenly manner, and not one out of twenty walks with a proper carriage. The way a person stands and walks has a decided effect upon health and personal efficiency. If the chest is flat and the head leans forward, the breathing is shallow and the diaphragm does not do its proper work. The effects of this are seen in lack of energy and vigor. A bad carriage has also a bad effect upon digestion, and is frequently the cause of indigestion. The reason why many people hold themselves badly is because they are not familiar with the necessary requisites for a good carriage. It is not sufficient to "hold up your head," because changing the angle of the head does not necessarily correct an improper carriage. Another familiar phrase, "Throw your shoulders back," is not much more helpful than the first advice. The position of the shoulders has little effect upon the position of the body. The shoulders hang as it were upon the outside of the body, and they may be held back without any effect upon the organs of the trunk.

**Secret of a Proper Carriage.**—The secret of a proper carriage is to keep the spine erect. This demands considerable attention until the habit is acquired. Standing and walking with a straight spine is a matter of habit rather than of muscle, and depends upon nerve control. The nerve centers can be trained only by constant attention. If a man held his body in a good position for two months he would acquire the habit and maintain a proper carriage thereafter. The simple rule to keep the neck pressed back against the collar will help one to acquire a correct carriage. When the spine is erect, the ribs are held in their proper position. This increases the chest cavity, the lungs have room to expand, and the heart action is vigorous and unimpeded.

There is also a direct relation between a proper carriage and the health of the organs of the body. The stomach on the left side and the liver on the right fit closely against the diaphragm muscle. The circulation of the blood is more feeble in the liver than elsewhere in the body, owing to the fact that the blood must be forced through a network of small veins. This is one reason why sedentary people are liable to suffer from biliousness unless they are abstemious and careful of their food. A stooping position obstructs the work of the liver. A tendency to biliousness may be cured by correcting a bad carriage and taking deep breathing exercises three or four times a day. It should be remembered that round shoulders are the result of bad carriage and not the cause of it. While exercising, the body should be held in proper position as it will tend to keep this position after the exercises are over.

**Exercises to Improve One's Carriage.**—Two simple exercises that help to improve one's carriage are the following:

1. Inhale slowly and as deeply as possible. While this is being done press the neck back firmly against the collar and hold it there. This straightens the part of the back between the shoulders and expands the chest.
2. When standing erect draw in the abdomen vigorously as far as possible and hold this position for a moment. Repeat this exercise ten times the first day and increase it until it can be done fifty times both morning and evening. Practice this exercise every time you think of it during the day and the muscles that hold the abdomen in place will be greatly strengthened.

**Effect of Physical Bearing on Mind.**—A good carriage has a good effect upon a man's feeling of self-respect. If he slouches along with his eyes on the ground, and his abdomen sagging, he has a hangdog look, and feels much the same. Whereas the man who stands erect with his chest out and his abdomen in, is able to look the world straight in the face, and shows that his body is under the control of his will. When you are walking along the street and wake to the fact that you are carrying yourself badly, you will find that the physical effort to stand straight affects you mentally also. When you hold the head well back you are able to look people squarely in the face. This not only gives an impression of self-control but it will actually tend to help you to control yourself. A flat chest, flabby muscles, round or stooped shoulders and jelly-like abdomen indicate lack of self-control and without self-control there cannot be strong personality.

**Effect of Worry on Character.**—Worry is a foe to the development of character and personality. It is poison to the body and a handicap to the mind. It is the cause of many failures. Salespersons who continually come in contact with irritable and worrisome customers are especially liable to it. Worry, therefore, is a state of mind that should be overcome. It is fed by fear of something which may never happen. It grows by what it feeds on, and increases in proportion as it is given expression. Every normal activity is affected by it, and it is only a question of time before the person who worries becomes sick. The simplest food eaten when a person is worried will often cause indigestion.

Those who have acquired the worry habit know that it does them harm, and often make the resolution to control their thoughts. Good resolutions, however, will not cure the



habit. Keeping the mind occupied with things of importance both to ourselves and others is the only cure. If the hours of the day are taken up with interesting and healthful occupation, there is no time for the mind to brood and worry. Learn to be interested in your daily work and take up a hobby to occupy the mind when the day's work is over. A hobby, more than anything else, dispels gloom and worry by furnishing something which affords both interest and pleasure. The work of the following day will be better done if the worries of the present day are forgotten for a while. When we allow the mind to worry we show a lack of mental self-control and our character and personality suffer in consequence.

**Fresh Air and Deep Breathing.**—The open air is the greatest health-producing and worry-curing agency in existence, and everyone should spend as much time as possible out of doors. To get into the fresh air is good, to get the fresh air into you is better. Therefore when out of doors make a practice of breathing deeply. This rids the blood of its poisonous impurities and there is no better practice for renewing energy of body and cheerfulness of mind than deep breathing.

The following simple exercise suggested by Signor Bonci, a famous singer, is well worth regular practice:

Lie flat on the back, with the head directly on the floor and the arms stretched above the head. Take a deep breath, distending the diaphragm as fully as possible. Then slowly exhale, pressing the air from the bottom of the lungs first, drawing the diaphragm inwards to commence with and upwards at the end until all the air is expelled from the lungs, as one would squeeze a tube of paint. By practicing this method twenty times each morning and as often as

you can throughout the day, the lung capacity will gradually be increased, and the whole body benefited.

**Rules for Health Development.**—The following are a few simple rules that every sedentary worker should follow as a means of building up the health of personality:

1. Spend at least two hours in the fresh air each day.
2. Always breathe through the nose. Mouth breathing is not only deforming but dangerous to health.
3. Practice deep breathing as an exercise until it becomes a habit.
4. Take every opportunity of getting into the country, and when there take exercise which encourages natural deep breathing.

Bear in mind always the importance of first impressions. The man of commanding size and well-proportioned body attracts attention because he is just a little out of the ordinary. A customer "sizes up" and weighs in the balance the appearance of the person who waits on her. A body of wholesome appearance under the control of the will is always pleasing. A body which slouches along with stooping shoulders, and a drooping mouth to correspond, is unattractive to others and a handicap to its owner.

**Dress and Personality.**—No person in business can afford to be untidy or shabby. No self-respecting merchant will allow salespeople who wear soiled linen to sell his goods. Clothes should be spotlessly clean, neat, in good order, and becoming, and free from either slovenliness or foppishness. Overdressing is as bad as careless dressing.

The dress of both sexes should be quiet, simple, and dig-

nified. Special pains should be taken to avoid prevailing fads and fancies which come and go with the seasons. Startling contrasts and exaggerated effects should be avoided. Flashy ties and socks, and the use of perfumes only reveal vanity. Every salesperson should be well-groomed without aspiring to be a fashion-plate.

Salespersons should carefully look themselves over to see if they are wearing anything that attracts too much attention, or if there is anything that repels. Many large stores insist upon a uniform dress for saleswomen, consisting of a black skirt and black waist with white neckwear during the six colder months of the year, and a black skirt and white shirtwaist during the six warmer months. Uniform dress for both men and women might well be adopted in all stores. It is a business proposition and every merchant should make arrangements to furnish the clothes at cost. A neat serge suit, no jewelry, a plain tie, collars and cuffs always clean, clothes always carefully brushed, and shoes always polished is the best costume for salesmen.

Shoes are also an important detail of one's appearance. A neat-fitting, well-polished shoe is the requirement for each sex. Run-over heels and worn-out shabby shoes should not be worn. If the clothes are not up to the standard, the mind is usually conscious of the fact, and so is diverted from the customer and the goods. When a salesperson knows that he or she is dressed correctly, entire attention may be concentrated upon the customer.

**Bad Breath.**—Salespersons should pay particular attention to their breath. Catarrh, decayed and improperly brushed teeth, and unclean mouths are a few of the causes of offensive breaths. Offensive breaths cause the loss of many

sales, and are known to drive customers away from the store. If salespersons realized how offensive a foul breath is and how it spoils the effect of their personality, they would make every effort to remedy the matter.

The smell of tobacco smoke is disliked by many women. In some cases the smell of tobacco on a salesman has lost customers for the store where he was employed. Salesmen should take care that tobacco smoke cannot be detected about their person while serving customers. Many men make the practice of changing their store clothes, and wearing another suit for lounging and smoking. This is an advisable plan and worth the extra trouble that it takes.

**The Gum-Chewing Habit.**—The chewing of gum is a disgusting habit which is easily corrected, yet it is common among a certain class of saleswomen. If the average gum-chewing salesgirl would stand in front of a mirror and note the effect of her facial contortions upon her personality, she would not wonder why sensible people have no respect for those who have acquired the foolish habit. Many sales are lost through gum-chewing. The habit should not be allowed in any store, and any infringement of the rule should be severely punished.

**The Effect of Smiles and Cheerfulness.**—The expression of the face is one of the prime factors in personality. A salesperson should always wear a smile. A cheerful face is always attractive and may be a selling asset. No one likes to buy from a morose or disagreeable salesperson. But while the manner should be pleasant it should not be effusive. An agreeable manner may be cultivated until it becomes part of a person's real self. Effusiveness distracts and repels. A

pleasant, smiling countenance must have the background of a contented mind and healthy body.

One of the secrets of developing personality is to know that you can succeed. Knowing that you can sell goods begets confidence, and this in time develops earnestness and enthusiasm, without which personality becomes soft and flabby, so to speak, just as an unused muscle. The personality of a salesman who has a sparkle in his eye, elasticity in his step, and certainty in his movements caused by his earnestness and enthusiasm will appeal to people, though his face be plain and unattractive. Do not shuffle the feet; do not hesitate or waver; hold the head up; look people in the eye; be graceful, kindly, courteous, and attentive; and your bearing and appearance will please and win customers. These are basic factors of a winning personality and may be acquired by every salesperson.

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### Questions

1. Explain why it is impossible to have personality without character.
2. How may the quality of personality be acquired?
3. What decides the amount of exercise necessary for a salesperson?
4. What are the effects of bad carriage?
5. What is the secret of proper carriage?
6. Why is worry detrimental to selling?
7. What is the importance of deep breathing? Give a deep-breathing exercise.
8. Give the essentials of a salesperson's business dress.
9. What is the importance of a uniform dress for salespersons of both sexes?
10. What precautions should be taken to prevent offensive odors?
11. State the fundamentals for a proper facial expression.

12. Describe the basic factors of a winning personality.
13. What kind of exercise is most conducive to health?
14. Describe the effects of bad carriage on digestion.
15. What are the factors of first impression?

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## CHAPTER VI

### COURTESY

**Character and Manners Expressions of Courtesy.**—Character is the foundation of all true courtesy. Courtesy is not an artificial manner. It springs from the heart, and is an expression of thoughtfulness for others. It has thus a reflex action, that is, its tendency is to banish from one's own manner all coarseness and rudeness.

Manners are the outward expression of courtesy and are sometimes called the minor morals. The word "manners" refers to the specific acts of daily life and deals with little things as well as big. Manners are the expression of the refinement or coarseness of our nature, of our good breeding or our vulgarity, and of our truth or our deceit. Good manners are right habits of body and of mind working harmoniously. Speaking of manners, Emerson says, "A beautiful form is better than a beautiful face; a beautiful behavior is better than a beautiful form; it gives a higher pleasure than statuary or pictures; it is the finest of the fine arts."

**The Sunny, Radiant Smile.**—The face that continually lightens up with a smile is the one that attracts customers. Much service is spoiled by a scowling countenance. The worst grouch that enters a store may be cheered up by an agreeable and smiling greeting. The happy smile and the courteous word of welcome put the average customer in a friendly mood. Many a saleswoman wins friends by her sunny face. Customers like to be served by her and bring

their friends to buy from her. If she is engaged when they enter the store they wait for her. The cheerfulness of her appearance and the charm of her smile make permanent customers and build business.

It is not necessary to laugh or to joke all the time, but every person whether serving in a store or not should strive to present a cheerful front to the world under all conditions. Everybody likes the person of a sunny, cheerful disposition and everybody avoids the presence of the peevish person whose gloomy face indicates all sorts of dismal thoughts and internal troubles. To show ill-temper and an ugly mood to the world at large is a sign of bad manners. To keep a cheerful front is a mark of courtesy and good breeding.

**Smiles That Are a Hindrance.**—The smile of many salespersons, unfortunately, is affected; it never changes, and it is the same for every customer. Such a smile is a hindrance not a help. Try to acquire the right attitude of mind, so that your smile is the expression of genuine interest in your work.

Furthermore, beware of the smile—so-called—that is the expression of conceit or ill-nature, the smile that is sarcastic, sneering, incredulous, condescending, or pitying, knowing, bored, or vacant. The pitying smile is often seen when the customer desires to look at a cheaper article than the one first shown. The sarcastic smile is often shown when the customer insists that she is a more competent judge of her needs than the salesperson. The knowing smile is often expressed when the customer says that she is buying an inexpensive garment for the maid. The bored smile sometimes breaks out when the customer speaks of the exceptional cleverness of her children. The idiotic, the meaningless, and



the vacant smile disfigures the face of the salesperson who considers her smirk her chief stock-in-trade.

A deliberate, labored smile is never genuine and a mechanical smile is recognized as a mark of discourtesy. A mere screwing up of the cheeks and the corners of the mouth is a grin and a handicap to one's personality. The real genuine article, the smile that comes up from the heart as an expression of courtesy and character, is the only one that should do duty behind the retail counter. Every customer recognizes a true smile and its message of welcome.

**Self-Control and Character.**—Self-control and sincerity are virtues which every salesperson should strive to acquire. Anger is out of place in business and nowhere more than behind the retail counter. To give expression to any strong feeling no matter how justified it may be, in the presence of a customer, is a sign of rudeness and lack of courtesy. Self-control is necessary to curb the moods of anger and of the other emotions, and to keep in the background one's personal desires, in order that the idea of service to the customer may always be foremost. Without self-control as a guiding principle there can be no development of character, no self-discipline, and successful selling is impossible.

**How to Develop Self-Control.**—Self-control may be developed in precisely the same way as we tone up a weak muscle, namely, by regular exercise day by day. Let each person, as a means of self-discipline, perform each day a few acts which are disagreeable to him. This practice will help in the acquirement of self-control. The exercises may be as simple as, for instance, the dropping for a time of an intensely interesting book at the most thrilling page of the story;

jumping out of bed at the first moment of waking; walking home when one would prefer to take the car; talking to some disagreeable person and trying to be agreeable and courteous. These little exercises in moral discipline, which have a good effect on a person's whole character, are the means whereby we train ourselves in habits of self-control and courtesy. Self-control can be attained in great things only through self-control in little things. We must study ourselves if we wish to discover the weak points that need strengthening. Self-analysis is the first step in self-control. Are we selfish, vain, cowardly, morbid, bad-tempered, lazy? Do we worry, does the mind wander, do we lack definite purpose? All these defects of character ~~indicate a lack of self-control~~. To improve our character and ~~acquire self-control~~, we must try to overcome these weaknesses at their slightest manifestation. Every salesperson should strive to acquire a mastery over such defects of character as the above, because they are a serious handicap to selling.

**The Handicap of Self-Consciousness.**—Self-consciousness in even the slightest degree is a great hindrance to good work behind the counter. Self-consciousness means that we are always thinking of what other people think of us. It shows itself as much in the carriage as in words and expression. It should be broken down at all costs, and this can be done usually with comparative ease through the genuine effort to forget ourselves by becoming interested in others. Then the awkwardness and the defiant attitude of mind and body that usually accompany self-consciousness disappear. Awkwardness, shyness, vanity, and a high-and-mighty attitude are forms of self-consciousness. All these traits are revealed in the bearing of the body and are foes to a courteous and considerate manner.

**The Confidence of Self-Respect.**—Self-respect is essential in winning respect from others and every salesperson should cultivate this trait. Self-respect is not egotism or conceit, but is the self-reliance, dignity, courage, and independence of true manhood or womanhood. Self-respect must be real, genuine, or it is nothing at all. Self-respecting persons can always look others in the eye; the power follows as a consequence of right living, straight thinking, clean thoughts, and a clear conscience. Self-respect begets self-confidence and this gives courage. When we respect ourselves we usually impress others with our sincerity and please without effort as a natural consequence. The salesperson's confidence in himself and in the statements which he makes about the goods sold gives the self-respect which wins respect from others. It is a priceless asset in retail selling.

**Aspects of Courtesy.**—There are two aspects to courtesy both of which the salesperson must bear in mind. The first concerns one's external manners and bearing; the second, one's thoughtfulness for the customer's tastes, interests, and feelings. Like any other accomplishment, good manners may be acquired by study, by observation, by imitation, and by practice. The courtesy of good manners is a thing to which customers are always entitled, however unreasonable and irritating they may be. Good manners are a mark of self-control. They are acquired by the cultivation of patience and calmness and when shown, others cannot help but respond.

**Courtesy an Expression of Thoughtfulness.**—The second aspect of courtesy manifests itself in an earnest desire to help and be accommodating. It is the practice of the golden rule—treating others as you wish to be treated. If a cus-

tomer who rushes into a store shows that he is in a hurry, it is courteous for the salesperson to be quick and attentive in manner. If a woman who comes to your counter looks tired and fatigued, offer her a chair if one is available. Such little deeds of courtesy as these require observation and a quick perception. Opportunities to show thoughtfulness of this kind are seen by one salesperson and not noticed by another. The average salesperson is not a keen observer. A little practice, however, will soon increase one's powers in this respect, and enable the salesperson to show courtesy to customers.

**How to Say "Thank You."**—A salesperson should never fail to thank a customer in a way that indicates sincerity, as if the expression comes from the heart. Sincere thanks at the end of a sale make the customer feel that her trade is valued, and will generally influence her to patronize the store in the future. The two simple words "Thank you," when expressed sincerely and earnestly, are more important than the average salesperson believes. It is not the expressionless, mechanical repetition of these words that counts but their sincere utterance; as if it has been a pleasure to serve. In the opinion of George J. Whelan, head of the United Cigar Stores, not one salesperson in twenty knows how to say "Thank you" properly. Mr. Whelan once remarked that if a bible were ever written for his salesmen, the first of its ten commandments should be the instruction to say "Thank you." He insists upon the strictest observance of the rule to every customer, and any salesman who forgets is liable to be dismissed.

**The Courtesy of Impartiality.**—Courtesy demands that the same attention be given to the shopper "who is just look-

ing around" as to the one who buys. The visitor who just strolls through the store today may be the buyer of tomorrow. Many salespersons as soon as they find that a customer is not going to purchase, at once change their attitude; and this change is very noticeable. No person should be allowed to sell goods unless his or her manners are uniformly courteous to all. The same consideration should be shown to the person "just looking around" as to the purchaser; to the laborer's wife as to the daughter of the most influential man in the city; to the purchaser of five cents' worth of goods as to the buyer of five hundred dollars' worth. Every customer should be made to feel that she is the most important person in the store. If she is treated in this way she will probably trade at the store in the future. Customers should be treated as guests of the store and the salespersons should consider themselves representatives of the proprietor, who naturally wants his guests to feel at ease and welcome.

**Acts of Discourtesy to be Avoided.**—Three acts of discourtesy that should be guarded against because they injure the trade of any store, are the following:

1. One salesperson should never laugh or joke with another while a customer is buying. Some customers may infer that the jokes are at their expense, and leave the store probably never to return. We are all sensitive about remarks made in our hearing which we think may refer to us; therefore, a salesperson should be very careful when customers are standing by, not to say anything which may be misconstrued. An innocent expression or remark made on the side may touch the sensitiveness of a customer, as was the case with a salesman who was busy cutting some samples for a customer from the goods piled on the counter. Another salesman made

the remark, "What are you doing today?" The reply came, "All I have been doing is cutting samples." The customer overheard the remark, and thinking it referred to her request for samples, said "I will not cause any more unnecessary trouble." She left the store feeling insulted. Thus not only was her trade lost, but if she mentioned the incident to her friends the reputation of the store and its sales as well would suffer. When waiting on customers it is best to attend strictly to business and to what the customers have to say.

2. A salesperson should never make remarks about one customer to another. The remarks may be repeated to the criticized person. A shoe salesman was waiting upon a lady who had a large foot and was hard to please. After he had sold her a pair of shoes and she had left the store, while waiting on another customer who had a small foot and one easy to fit, he remarked that it was quite a task to fit large feet. The customer thought he was referring to the feet of the person whom he had just fitted. The remark was repeated and reached the first woman's ears. Naturally she was indignant and said that she would not enter the store again.

3. Funny speeches, bright remarks, and smart retorts should not be permitted in any store while customers are present. Silly, commonplace, or frivolous chatter is distasteful to the average customer. Such chatter shows lack of store discipline and lowers the standard of its courtesy.

**The Standard of Store Courtesy.**—There is not a high standard of courtesy in the average store. A well-known merchant employing a sales force of several hundred said that he knew as a fact that only 10 per cent of his salespersons were truly courteous, that 40 per cent were courteous part of the time, and that 50 per cent had yet to learn the meaning of

the term. Another merchant once remarked that more than three-quarters of the complaints that are made of a store have reference to lack of courtesy on the part of salespersons. Complaints spring from customers who go away angered or dissatisfied because they have not received the courtesy and consideration to which they are entitled.

Burke once remarked that manners were of more importance than laws, while Chesterfield said that manners should adorn knowledge in order to smooth its way through the world. Happy are those salespersons whose natural endowment and early training have made them courteous in spirit, delicate in tact, refined in taste, composed in manner, and whose behavior is always appropriate to the business in which they are engaged and the circumstances of the case.

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### Questions

1. What is courtesy?
2. Why is character the real foundation of true courtesy?
3. What are good manners?
4. Mention the several kinds of smiles.
5. Why should salespersons pay attention to the smile?
6. What are the requisites of a proper smile?
7. Why is self-control important?
8. How may self-control be developed?
9. Why is self-analysis necessary?
10. Why is self-consciousness a barrier to selling?
11. What is the bearing of self-respect upon selling?
12. What are the two aspects to courtesy?
13. Describe the proper way to use "Thank you."
14. What attention should be shown the person just looking around?
15. Mention acts of discourtesy that handicap selling.

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## CHAPTER VII

### INITIATIVE AND TACT

**Importance of Initiative.**—A salesperson may have a position in one of the best stores in America and handle goods of the finest quality; but if he lacks initiative, he will never climb high in the ranks of salespersons. Initiative is not an instinctive trait, that is, something we are born with; it is the result of environment and training. A person who lacks initiative is much in the position of a motor-boat without the motor. He must either be pushed or towed. Many salespersons remain trailers and followers of others all their lives, simply because their powers of originality have never been developed. The majority of young men and women who enter the selling profession hardly know what the word initiative means. It is in some respects the most important thing in salesmanship.

**Illustration of Initiative.**—Initiative may be defined as doing the right thing without being told. It is the ability to see what ought to be done and to do it. A good example of initiative is illustrated by the following story: A salesman whose line was women's hats found competition so strong in a Western city that he was about to give up in despair and leave the town. No matter where he went the salesmen of rival houses had already placed their hats and apparently booked all the orders in sight. His hats were just as stylish as those of competitors, in fact, more so, for they had a distinction that the others lacked, but the retailers would not try them.

It happened that an actress who was the craze of the moment, was playing in the city. Everybody went to see her; everybody liked her and everybody enjoyed her play. The salesman was no exception, and as he was staying at her hotel he arranged to meet her. At a matinee shortly afterward, the actress appeared, not in the conventional hat that she had been wearing, but in one of the salesman's models, and the salesman busily advertised the fact. Forthwith this style of hat became the "rage" and he was barely able to fill his orders.

**How to Develop Initiative.**—Initiative has its foundation in self-reliance and receives its motive power from will. The more things salespersons can do for themselves without consulting or relying upon someone else, the greater the development of initiative. The quicker a decision is reached, the quicker is a salesperson in a position to act. The fundamentals of initiative therefore are self-confidence, decisiveness, and will-power. To cultivate initiative, you should begin with the smaller affairs of life and work toward the larger ones. Training should be directed towards acquiring a habit of quick definite decision. Quick decision in small matters which are not vital is the first essential. If a purchase of wearing apparel is being made and one article vies with another for approval, make up your mind quickly. If it is necessary to decide where to spend the summer vacation, get all the information possible concerning various places that are of interest, make a careful comparison of their advantages, then decide without hesitation on the one that seems to suit your needs and purse. Act in this way in all small matters.

A person who thinks quickly and clearly, and acts promptly

and decisively, is not so liable to make a mistake in his decision as the man who hesitates and comes to a standstill before every trifling problem. It should be borne in mind that first impressions are apt to be correct impressions. Therefore hesitation gains nothing; instead, it wastes time and weakens the will.

**The Faculty of Quick Decision.**—Hesitation is one of the worst faults into which salespersons fall. Many hesitate to decide when there is no reason except the habit of indecision. This makes the mental dawdler, the salesman who spends several minutes in deciding upon a course of action. Some clerks occupy most of their time with trifling matters. They are fitted only to fill orders, and not to sell goods. Real live salespersons do not waste their time on petty details. They size up each problem as it presents itself and decide without delay.

By observing your habits for a few days you will notice that those things most liable to cause indecision are often so unimportant that it is folly to waste time and energy over them. The habit of deciding little problems with certainty and dispatch having been formed, you will acquire the confidence needed to make quick decision in the more important problems as they arise. The habit should be formed of quickly weighing the advantages for and against a course of action and then making a decisive choice. Vacillation, that is, the inability to make up your mind, is always a sign of weakness and the foe to initiative.

Persons who train their minds into habits of decisive action are unconsciously cultivating initiative. New problems are then approached with confidence, doubts and half-decided minor questions are quickly cleared up, and the mind is left

free to solve the matter as a whole. No one can develop initiative who is continually wavering and reconsidering matters already decided.

**Initiative Tempered with Judgment.**—Initiative develops the faculty of judgment. Good judgment presupposes the ability to weigh the arguments for and against a proposition, and to decide the best course to pursue in a particular case from the information at hand. It is an indispensable quality in business. Every salesperson's opinion and judgment are at times requested, but only a small percentage take pains to develop the faculty.

**The Essence of Tact.**—Tact is doing or saying the right thing at the right time. It is a mental trait which in its way is just as valuable as initiative and good judgment. It is impossible to estimate the loss which results from lack of tact—the blundering, the stumbling, the slips, and the fatal mistakes which salespersons make because they do not know how to do or say the right thing at the right time. Real selling ability is often wasted or not used effectively because salespersons lack the quality of tact to direct it effectively. Where competition is keen and many stores are trying to attract the customer's attention, tact plays an important part in retailing. One prominent merchant puts tact at the head of the list in his success recipe, the other three qualities being enthusiasm, knowledge of business, and dress.

**How to Cultivate Tact.**—The mental alertness which enables us to say and do what is best under the circumstances seems a simple and natural matter, and yet there are few salespeople who do not at times feel that they have not been

tactful in what they have said or done. When a successful selling appeal is made to the customer, tact is shown in the way the selling talk is presented. When a salesperson changes methods to suit the temperament of a customer, tact is used. Tact always helps salesmanship and yet many salespersons do not sell all the goods they might, simply because they are not always as tactful as they might be. It is sometimes difficult for persons behind the counter to exercise tact effectively but they will find that its practice becomes much easier if they will try to place themselves on the other side of the counter and look at things through the customer's eyes.

**The Danger of Tactless Remarks.**—Tact can be shown in many ways. An exceedingly stout young woman went into a prominent Boston store and asked the saleswoman to show her a pink georgette blouse. Several styles were offered of a simple, tailored effect. "Haven't you something fancier, for dress wear?" the woman asked. "Yes, madam, I have," the saleswoman answered politely; "but for a stout woman like you, I always find the plain waists more becoming." The customer got red in the face and replied, "My dear, I didn't ask you whether I was stout or not. I merely asked to see some more elaborate blouses and if you don't care to show them to me, I'll go to some store that will."

This incident illustrates the fact that tact is needed in dealing with women over the counter just as much as in social life. It is tact never to refer to any physical defect or peculiarity of the customer. Instead of saying, "This is a good blouse for a stout woman," the saleswoman might have said, "Here is a good-looking blouse that you may like. It has rather becoming long, slender lines." The remark should

form a pleasant picture in the customer's mind. Therefore, if she is stout the idea of long, slender lines should make an instant appeal to her. A customer may talk disparagingly of her own defects, but she resents the least hint of them from others. A saleswoman should show the goods she considers most appropriate for the buyer's needs; but if the customer makes no reference to her own physical shortcomings, it shows lack of tact for a saleswoman to mention them. If it is necessary to mention them the utmost diplomacy is required.

**Effect of Tactless Salesmanship.**—A tactful salesperson never contradicts a customer even if the latter is wrong. A lady went into a furniture store to buy a set of dining-room furniture. She prided herself on her knowledge of furniture of the various periods. The salesman showed a chair belonging to a certain set. "Oh, yes, that is Queen Anne style," the lady remarked. "No, it isn't, madam, it is William and Mary. See?" as the clerk proudly exhibited a little tag attached to the chair identifying the period. The lady was so embarrassed, first at being wrong in a matter in which she prided herself on her knowledge, and secondly at the tactless correction of the clerk, that she invented an excuse and walked out of the store without buying. Through the tactless and stupid blunder of this salesman the store lost a \$250 sale. The customer went directly to another furniture store, and paid that amount for a set identically the same as the one kept by the former store.

**An Illustration of Tact.**—Tact may be shown in so little a thing as using a customer's wrong pronunciation. A smartly dressed woman went to a counter in one of our well-known department stores and said, "I'd like to see a filet collar and

cuff set." The customer asked for the set in rather a haughty manner, and at first the saleswoman did not understand her because she had pronounced the word to rhyme with eyelet. "I beg your pardon, I did not quite understand what you asked for." "A filet collar and cuff set," she repeated unconscious of her wrong pronunciation. "Are you sure this lace is real?" she inquired when the saleswoman brought some collar and cuff sets. "Yes, madam, this is the real filet lace," and pronounced filet exactly as the customer had done. The lady bought two sets and left.

Tact implies patience, kindness, cheerfulness, sincerity of purpose, courtesy, gracious acceptance of a situation, clear observation, and the ability of deciding quickly as to the best thing to do or to say. It is the ability to sense the thoughts, feelings, or emotions of others so that nothing in our own words or actions antagonizes. This ability is sometimes inherent but more frequently it must be acquired. A salesperson who does not possess it cannot be tactful. It must be remembered that the possession of tact is largely a matter of thoughtfulness and consideration. These qualities are easy to acquire and there is no excuse for their lack in any person.

**Summary of Tact.**—Salespersons should analyze themselves carefully in order to make sure that they use tact in dealing with customers, and if not, they should try systematically to develop it. As a help to its acquirement the following indispensable elements in it may be listed:

1. Sympathetic knowledge of human nature, its fears, weaknesses, expectations, and inclinations.
2. Ability to put yourself in the customer's place and to consider a matter as it appears to him.
3. Quick perception of what is the expedient thing to do.

4. Recognition that there are thousands of different opinions of which your own is but one.
  5. Self-control, not to get angry with what a customer says or does, not to contradict or argue.
  6. Denial of the expression of thoughts which might unnecessarily offend.
  7. Recognition of what is customary under the circumstances and a gracious acceptance of the situation.
  8. A spirit of real, unfeigned cheerfulness, courtesy, and kindness; of serenity and sincerity.
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### Questions

1. Why do many salespersons remain trailers all their lives?
2. Why is initiative the biggest word in salesmanship?
3. Give two examples of initiative from your own experience.
4. How does initiative receive its motive power?
5. What are the fundamentals of initiative?
6. Why is the habit of quick decision important?
7. Why is hesitation a bad fault for any salesperson?
8. What is the relation between decisive action and initiative?
9. Why is tact a valuable asset in selling?
10. Give two instances of tact from your own experience.
11. Why is it poor salesmanship to refer to a defect in a customer's appearance?
12. Why should a salesperson never contradict a customer?
13. What demands does tact make upon a salesperson?

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## CHAPTER VIII

### SPEECH AND VOICE<sup>1</sup>

**Importance of a Pleasing Voice.**—A pleasing speech and voice are almost equal to personal appearance in their importance on the effect of a salesperson's personality. A rasping voice, a harsh discordant voice, a high-pitched nasal intonation produce an irritating, disagreeable impression. A low, clear, well-modulated voice indicates refinement and should be carefully cultivated by everybody.

The voice is an expression of mental and physical condition. Changes of health and of mood quickly reflect themselves upon it. A clear, resonant voice indicates that body, mind, and spirits are working together harmoniously. The quality of the voice reveals a serene temper or the reverse; worry and agitation, or firmness and ease. Sincerity, frankness, and courage reflect themselves unmistakably in the tone. A pleasing voice and the right use of it require that all the nerves act and vibrate in unison.

**How to Control the Voice.**—The voice may be trained through building up the entire vocal mechanism by a systematic course of training, until all the parts perform their tasks in a simple and natural manner. This demands attention to control of the breath and to the cultivation of accuracy in speech. Correct breathing gives control over the voice

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<sup>1</sup> In connection with this chapter the student will find it profitable to read carefully Chapters IV to XI of "Talking Business," by John Mantle Clapp, Volume I of "Language for Men of Affairs," published by the Ronald Press Company, New York, 1920.

and insures its use with the least possible exertion. By breathing properly, health, mental power, and vocal control are perfected. It is natural in infancy to breathe correctly, but because of bad habits acquired later the majority of persons breathe incorrectly. The control of the breath as it is sent through the larynx (the voice box) has much to do with the tone and quality of the voice. If the breath flows gently through the larynx, a soft tone of voice is produced; if it is forced through the larynx the result is a loud tone, and if the breath is shot through the larynx, an explosive tone follows. The strength of the pressure applied by the abdominal muscles and the diaphragm to the lungs regulates the tone and loudness of the voice. These muscles constitute a lever that regulates the breath, and indirectly governs the voice.

**Proper Breathing.**—The lungs are the essential organs of respiration. A bountiful supply of oxygen is needed for the full performance of their functions. There are two lungs, the right and left. The right possesses three distinct chambers or lobes and the left two lobes. The majority of persons use only the upper lobes in breathing. This allows waste materials to collect in the middle and lower lobes and may generate a gas causing the poisoning of the whole system. When full use is made of the diaphragm in breathing, fresh air is forced into all lobes and there remains no space for the accumulation of waste materials. The diaphragm is a muscle between the chest cavity and the abdomen. When this muscle is forced upward its contraction forces the air out of the lower lobes of the lungs, and when it is drawn downward its expansion draws fresh air into the lungs. Diaphragmatic breathing is the only correct method of breathing and is illustrated by the practice of the following simple, easy exercise:

Stand erect with the weight of the body resting equally on both feet. Draw a full breath by extending or pushing out the abdominal muscles and in this way draw down the diaphragm. The lungs are now full of air. Now with a slow and gentle inward pressure of the abdominal muscles caused by drawing in the abdomen force the diaphragm upward and expel the breath. Draw the air in through the nostrils and expel the breath through the mouth. Practice this exercise night and morning, at first repeating it five times but increasing the number judiciously. Diaphragmatic breathing is one of the most valuable means of increasing the health and strength of the body and gaining control over the voice.

**Defects of Tone.**—A pure tone of voice depends upon the ability to convert into tone every particle of breath used. An aspirate or the sound of the letter “h” is produced when some of the breath is allowed to escape unvocalized. A voice that is thin and squeaky in quality is a severe handicap to its owner. The remedy is to pay attention to the development of deep tones. One of the best exercises for this purpose is to practice for a few minutes each morning upon the vowel sound “o,” endeavoring to make it full, deep, and melodious.

There are four common vocal defects in particular that handicap those whose success depends in part upon their speech, as does that of salespersons:

1. Guttural or swallowed tones
2. Mouthed tones
3. Nasal tones
4. Lifeless tones

Guttural tones are the result of shaping the sounds too far back in the throat. Such tones are not only unpleasant to

the ear, but are injurious to the person who uses them. Chronic laryngitis, inflammation of the membrane of the throat, and loss of voice often result from the habit of "talking down in the throat." An aid in overcoming this defect is to practice humming the letter "m" with lips closed. Another is to make special effort for sharp-cut articulation.

Mouthed tones are those that seem to be held in the mouth, between the larynx and the lips. They suggest that the speaker has his mouth filled with food. As with guttural tones, the remedy is to bring the word out on the lips, to take special pains to articulate sharply.

Nasal tones result from clogging of the nasal passages which prevents the tone vibrations from passing through them. Hold the nose between the thumb and finger so as to close the organ, and then attempt to speak, and you will see that it is not speaking through the nose that produces the nasal twang but a failure to do so. It is for this reason that those suffering from nasal catarrh have nasal voices. In some cases, the sound is never allowed to get beyond the pharynx because the soft palate is raised so high as to close entirely the passage into the head; in other cases the sound vibrations are allowed to enter the head but the nostrils are so contracted as to cause a most harsh and unpleasant sound, the most aggravated form of nasal tone. A nasal voice is displeasing and should be corrected. It is indicative of catarrh. The one way to overcome the nasal tone is to send the vibrations fully and clearly through the head passages. The practice of humming will help very considerably.

Lifeless tones are those expressionless sounds that convey no idea to the mind of the listener. The cause is usually a sluggish mentality. The cure is for the offender to arouse himself from his listlessness and become alert.

**The Cultivation of a Musical Tone.**—The need is widespread for a more careful cultivation of the speaking voice, and nowhere more than in the selling field. It is exceptional to find among salespeople a voice that is musical and well-modulated. Most salespersons speak with too much physical effort. They tighten the muscles of the throat and mouth instead of liberating them, and thus prevent the voice from flowing naturally and harmoniously. The remedy is to relax all the muscles used in speech. The throat muscles are relaxed in yawning. When the throat is tense and the voice tired from talking, a little exercise in yawning will do much to relieve the condition.

An important factor to remember in voice training is that we should speak through the throat and not from it. The musical quality of voice depends chiefly upon directing the tone towards the hard palate. From the arch above the teeth the voice receives much of its resonance. The best tones of the speaking voice are the middle and lower keys, and these should be used exclusively in ordinary forms of speech. A high-pitched voice, whether due to habit or to temperament, may be controlled through practice.

**How to Speak Clearly.**—To articulate clearly it is essential to speak with the lips. Many people speak with half-closed teeth, and mumble and muffle what they say. The result is that the quality of the voice and correctness of pronunciation are greatly impaired. Muffled speech is always objectionable. Moreover, as lips have an important part in the moulding of speech, all sounds should be brought forward and all words spoken on the lips. The shape which the lips assume has much to do with the quality and accuracy of the uttered sound. Speech cannot be clear unless the lips do

their part in moulding the sounds as they are formed into words.

**Rules for Voice Production.**—Reading aloud ten minutes each day, paying attention to one attribute at a time, is good exercise in voice training. The voice grows through use and it gains precisely in the way in which it is habitually used.

Grenville Kleiser gives the following rules for voice training which are of special importance to salespersons:

1. Pronounce your words distinctly and accurately, like “newly made coins” from the mint, but without pedantry.
2. Upon no occasion allow yourself to indulge in careless or incorrect speech.
3. Open the mouth well in conversation. Much indistinct speech is due to speaking through half-closed teeth.
4. Closely observe your conversation and that of others to detect faults and to improve your speaking style.
5. Vary your voice to suit the variety of your thought.  
A well-modulated voice demands appropriate change of pitch, force, perspective, and feeling.
6. Avoid loud talking.
7. Take care of the consonants and the vowels will take care of themselves.
8. Cultivate the music of the conversational tones.
9. Favor the low pitch of your voice.

**The Care of the Throat.**—The care of the throat plays an important part in voice production and should be given consideration. A serious weakness or affection of the throat may cut short the eloquence and thus the career of a salesperson. The delicate and intricate machinery of the vocal apparatus

renders it susceptible to misuse and exposure. The following simple rules if followed will protect the throat and keep the voice in trim:

1. Gargle the throat night and morning with salt and water.
2. Never force the voice.
3. Practice deep breathing.
4. Favor outdoor life.
5. Hum or sing a little each day.
6. Do not drink ice-cold water.
7. Read aloud at least ten minutes each day.

**Importance of Correct Speech.**—The use of good English is an important detail in the personality of a salesperson. By good English is not meant long words and high-sounding phrases. On the contrary the simpler the language, the better. Not only should all slang be avoided, but the sentences should be grammatically correct. The use of poor English in talking with educated customers gives them a poor impression of the salesperson's culture and education. Moreover, while some customers use poor language themselves they can appreciate the use of correct English by others, and they have a certain respect for the salesperson whose talk shows education and training. In our country, with our public schools for all children, poor English is really more a matter of carelessness than of ignorance. Of course, the ordinary salesperson who has not the advantage of a good education is liable to make some slight grammatical errors, but the fewer the better. It is not the purpose of this chapter to give lessons in the correct use of English. That is a study by itself, but it is strongly advised that salespersons who realize that they are deficient in their knowledge of the correct use



of our language should take special training to correct their faults.

**The Handicap of Vulgarity.**—Language may be said to possess the two functions of conveying ideas and of giving pleasure. The accurate use of words conveys the ideas one wishes to convey, and voice expression gives pleasure; both together indicate a degree of culture. Errors in speech and grammar are usually considered to be a sign of feeble intellectual ability. This reproach may be undeserved but it is a blemish that is a hindrance to a successful business career. Good language suggests carefulness and begets confidence. Careless speech to which little attention was given a few decades ago is today a sign of vulgarity. Frequently salespersons acquire the habit of using flippant slang expressions. “Search me,” “Well, that’s the limit,” and a score of other such vulgarities flow constantly from their lips. Such expressions are apt to suggest coarseness of mind as well as lack of breeding, and are a decided hindrance to a person’s advancement.

**The Importance of a Good Vocabulary.**—Care should be exercised in the choice of words. Words must be appropriate and intelligible to the customer. Many salespersons cannot express their selling points clearly because of the poverty of their vocabulary. They have not words enough to clothe their ideas and make them attractive. A good vocabulary is a necessary working tool for every person who wants to convey his ideas to others. It may be acquired with a little effort and there is little excuse for the lack of it. Good reading will not only increase one’s vocabulary but it will broaden the mind and furnish new ideas. It should be the practice of

a salesperson to read a few pages of a good book every night before retiring. A dictionary should be at the elbow and every word the meaning of which is not known should be ascertained. One's vocabulary may be increased by listening to the talk of educated people. A salesperson should make a careful study of words relating to the goods that are being sold.

**The Good Listener.**—To succeed behind the counter a salesperson must be a good listener. Courtesy requires that attention be focused on the customer, whose every word should be listened to with interest. Always look at the customer while she is talking. A good listener does not interrupt, and never supplies a word when a customer is talking, but allows the speaker to finish. To be a good listener is a valuable asset for every salesperson.

**The Handicap of Mannerisms.**—Mannerisms of every kind should be avoided. Sniffing, snuffling, clearing one's throat, coughing, or expectorating annoy or disgust the fastidious customer. Nervous mannerisms, such as wiggling the fingers, striking the counter with a pencil, or stroking the hair should be corrected. Mannerisms of this kind indicate that the nervous system is not under control of the will. Such defects may be corrected if a little effort is concentrated on their cure.

Successful selling depends upon the ability to please and interest customers and to hold their attention. If the salesperson gives thought to what is said, is earnest, sincere, and enthusiastic, the words will convey her meaning, and then there will be little trouble in interesting customers. Readiness in conversation is largely a matter of practice. It should

be the ambition of every salesperson to have a clear, well-modulated voice, to be a good talker, and a good listener.

**The Use of the Eyes.**—Emerson says that we get nine-tenths of our education through our eyes. Many persons talk with their eyes as well as with their tongues, and use the eye to add emphasis to their spoken words. The human eye may be considered a voiceless tongue, which plays an important rôle in conversation. It has a language of its own, a language that is easy of interpretation. By constantly looking at a customer, the trained salesperson will be able to follow her moods, to smile, or to be grave as seems to be more fitting. The average person does not observe keenly, and attention should be given to remedying the deficiency. The reward in gaining keener powers of observation will amply repay all efforts put forth to secure it.

**The Care of the Eyes.**—Eye-strain has an important effect upon health, and headache from this cause is a common ailment. The strain may be due to working in an improper light; to careless use of the eyes; to imperfection of vision, in which case glasses are necessary; to the use of improper lenses; to the use of the eyes when tired; or to ill-health. The cause should be ascertained and the remedy sought. Professor Hough says that the eyes should be kept well and sound by attention to the general health and welfare of the body. Work, play, rest, sleep, muscular exercise, a wise selection of food and attention to other hygienic habits help to keep the eyes well and sound. The organs of vision are too precious to be trifled with, and if one has weak eyes or pain in the eyes, it is always best to consult an oculist or the family physician.

### Questions

1. Why is the voice an expression of personality and of bodily condition?
2. How may a good selling voice be trained?
3. What is diaphragmatic breathing and describe its part in the production of a good voice?
4. What four vocal defects are handicaps in selling?
5. How may these defects be remedied?
6. What determines the musical quality of the voice?
7. What qualities should a good selling voice possess?
8. What are Mr. Kleiser's rules for voice training?
9. Why should the throat be carefully protected?
10. What are requisites for good English?
11. State and explain the two functions of language.
12. Mention mannerisms that should be avoided.
13. What training is necessary to develop keen powers of observation?
14. Why is it necessary to be a good listener?
15. Why should salespersons exercise care in the choice of words?

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## CHAPTER IX

### DEVELOPMENT OF CHARACTER AND INTELLECT

**Definition of Character.**—Someone has well said that as the letters of the alphabet enable us to spell reputation, so do the actions, looks, and words of a man enable us to read his true character. Character is what one is, while reputation is what one is thought to be. A man's character being himself must be moulded by himself. Bergson very well states it when he says, "What are we, in fact, what is our character, if not the condensation of the history that we have lived from our birth?" Character is the greatest of business assets. Persons of integrity, of high principles, of sterling honesty of purpose command the spontaneous homage of those who come in contact with them. It is natural to believe in such persons and to have confidence in them.

**Duty and Character Building.**—Persons serving behind the counter can act their part honestly and honorably and to the best of their ability. They can use their gifts and not abuse them. They can strive to make the best of life. They can be true, just, honest, and faithful even in small things. Commonplace though it may appear, doing one's duty embodies the highest ideals of life and character. Just as an abiding sense of duty upholds men in moments of great responsibility and in the highest of offices, it also sustains them in the humdrum transactions of every-day existence. The most important of all the virtues are those which stand the rough and tumble of daily use, that wear best and last the

longest. Simple honesty of purpose goes a long way toward building a successful career. Such resolute honesty holds the salesperson straight and forms a mainspring of vigorous action. Strict adherence to truth, integrity, and uprightness always pays. Without these sound principles to guide one through the trials of a selling career a man or woman is like a ship without a rudder or compass, left to drift hither and thither with every wind that blows.

**Character and the Control of Circumstance.**—Character is formed by a variety of trifling actions more or less under the regulation and control of the will. Not a day passes without its discipline whether for good or for evil. There is no act, however trivial, but has its train of consequences. Every action, every thought, every feeling contributes to the formation of character, and exercises an inevitable influence upon our future life. Thus character is undergoing a constant change for better or for worse; it is either being elevated on the one hand or degraded on the other. "There is no fault nor folly of my life," says John Ruskin, "that does not rise up against me, and take away my joy, and shorten my power of possession, of sight, and of understanding."

The mechanical law that action and reaction are equal, holds true in morals. Good deeds act and react on the doers of them, and so do evil deeds. Yet salespersons like all other persons are not the creatures so much as the creators of circumstances. By the exercise of their free will they can direct their actions, so that they will be productive of good rather than of evil. Character builds out of circumstances. "Nothing can work me damage but myself," said St. Bernard, "the harm that I sustain I carry about with me, and I am never a real sufferer but by my own fault."

**Formation of Character.**—Character cannot be formed without effort. Its development demands the exercise of constant self-watchfulness, self-discipline, and self-control. There may be much faltering, stumbling, and temporary defeat; difficulties and temptation must be fought and overcome; but if the spirit be strong, and the heart be upright no one need despair of ultimate success.

Character is revealed in conduct guided and inspired by principles, integrity, and practical wisdom. In its highest form, it is the individual will acting energetically under the influence of religion, morality, and reason. Salespersons of character are conscientious. They put their conscience into their work both in word and in action. In selling, it is not intellectual cleverness that tells so much as character; not brains so much as heart; not inborn genius so much as self-control, patience, and discipline, regulated by judgment.

**Development of Memory.**—To turn from character to the subject of intellect, what is known about things is simply what is remembered about them. This being so, one's knowledge is dependent upon memory. Memory, in turn, is dependent largely upon attention. Undivided attention gives clear impressions and vastly increases the power of the faculties. If we wish to obtain the fullest and clearest impression of an object or subject we should concentrate our attention upon it. It is a law of psychology that the intensity of the original impression determines the degree of the future remembrance or recollection, and that the intensity of the impression is proportional to the attention given the subject or object producing the impression. The experiences which leave the most permanent and intense impression upon the mind are those upon which the highest degree of attention



has been bestowed. Some authorities hold that attention to the matter in hand is the most important intellectual habit possible to man, and that every man has within him the power to develop a certain degree of genius by developing the power of concentrated attention. A great proportion of the things we see, hear, and feel, are almost immediately forgotten because we have given them but a trifling degree of attention. It is said that poor memory is practically poor attention, and that the habit of careless observation is the twin of deficient memory.

**Observation and Memory.**—The best tricks of Robert Houdin depended materially upon his quick and correct observation and his wonderful memory. It is related of him that in his earlier days, he would pass rapidly by a Paris shop, giving one sharp, quick glance at the window, then turn his eyes in another direction. Walking for a few minutes he would stop and with pencil and paper endeavor to recall and describe as many as possible of the articles in that shop window. He found that as a result of steady practice each day he could recollect a greater number of objects displayed in such a window, the explanation being that he was steadily developing the faculties which received and stored away impressions as well as those which recalled them. It is said that in time he was able to rush past a large store window filled with small wares and receive such a full, clear, and sharp impression of the objects displayed that he could hours afterward recall and describe every article with scarcely a mistake. The eye transmits to the brain every ray of light entering it, and it is believed that every impression as received is registered faintly. Most impressions, however, are faint, and the mind fails to store away and subsequently recall

any impressions except those that are the result of more or less interest or attention.

**Necessity of Observation in Salesmanship.**—The bearing of this on the work of selling goods is evident. Few salespersons are close observers. The average clerk remembers a thing in a general way but the details are missing. The problem for most salespersons is to develop the faculty of observation. The task of increasing the powers of observation will amply repay the salesperson for the time and labor expended.

As a rule impressions received through the eye are received more rapidly, but the memory seems to hold better that which enters the mind by means of the ear. Many remember what they have heard much more readily than that which they have seen. The salesperson should utilize the sense of hearing as well as that of sight in training his memory. Throughout his work he should bear in mind that the strength of an impression is in exact proportion to the amount of interest and attention bestowed upon the subject or object. Interest and attention should be cultivated by practice so that impressions of what is seen or heard will be registered distinctly. If this is done the foundation has been laid for the acquisition of an accurate memory.

**How to Remember Names.**—The faculty of remembering names varies greatly among individuals. Many find it difficult to remember the names of even their most intimate friends while others manifest a wonderful proficiency in the matter of remembering the name of almost everyone with whom they come into contact. The salesperson who readily recalls names has a powerful weapon at his command in

gaining the good-will of people, and the development of this faculty is well worth while. Memory for names may be developed just as one would develop any other faculty of the mind or part of the body, i.e., by attention and practice. Many bewail the fact that they have a poor memory but make no effort to improve it.

The first requisite for the development of the memory for names is the recording of a clear and distinct impression. It is often a help to repeat aloud the name of a person to whom we have just been introduced thereby utilizing the sense of hearing. Another advantage of this practice is that it fixes closer attention on the name. The trouble with many people is that they do not think of the names of the people they meet. They do not let the name impress itself upon the mind, the entire attention being given either to the stranger's appearance or general personality. Carelessness in this respect invariably results in the failure to recall the name when needed. Attention should be forced upon the name and by an act of will it should be connected with the impression of the person's appearance.

**How to Remember Faces.**—The faculty of remembering the faces of customers varies greatly among salespersons. Many have to meet a customer several times before they recognize her at sight. Many salespersons seem to forget even faces with which they have grown familiar. On the other hand, others recognize the face of any customer whom they serve, and the impression once formed seems to remain forever subject to instant recall. This is a valuable gift, as a customer returning to purchase will feel more kindly disposed towards a salesperson when she is recognized and called by name. Salespersons who do not remember faces are not in-

terested in them and give but scant attention to them. The rule of "slight interest, slight attention; slight attention, slight memory" applies here. The person who wishes to develop the faculty of remembering faces should begin to study them, to take an interest in them and to pay attention to them. In this way, the power of observation is directed to features and appearance, and a great improvement in the memory will be noted in a short time.

**Effect of Health on Memory.**—Sickness or ill-health in any form affects memory. Ill-health often handicaps a salesperson through its baneful effect in preventing the remembering of details about the goods, such as their selling points or their location. The power of memory is decreased not only by ill-health, but by poor food, overeating, lack of exercise, foul air, improper clothing, and worry. To possess a good memory a person must be in good health, and no better advice can be given than carefully to follow the laws of right living.

Brain fatigue weakens the memory and may practically destroy it. Tired salespersons often wonder why it is impossible for them to remember essential things, not knowing that the power of memory has been impaired by the toxic impurities accumulated in the body. Efficient selling cannot be done with tired and fatigued bodies and brains. This fact should be remembered by merchants as well as salespersons. Anything that wards off fatigue benefits both salesperson and merchant.

**Truth and Honesty as Aspects of Character.**—Truth and honesty are of course, aspects of character, but they play so large a part in successful selling that special discussion is

necessary. Marshall Field once made the statement that honesty, absolute honesty was the greatest asset in business and salesmanship. The plain truth about merchandise is what the customer wishes to know and what he has a right to know. Salesmanship is largely based upon service, and those who realize this do not employ subterfuges and tricks to induce a customer to buy goods at a profit to the store; rather they think of customers as their friends, who respect their advice and have confidence in them. This confidence is essential for successful selling and salesmanship should be based upon honesty and truthfulness.

Salespersons who wish to be honest with their customers, with their employers, and with themselves must know their goods or they will frequently misrepresent them without knowingly doing so. This misrepresentation will in due time be discovered, and will react like a boomerang on the customer's confidence in the salesperson. The following is a good example of unintentional misrepresentation resulting from ignorance.

Little or no attempt has been made to distinguish between shoddy and virgin wool. Before the advent of shoddy the term "all wool" was sufficient and significant enough, because then "all wool" was virgin wool. Now, however, more than two thirds of "all wool" clothing is not virgin wool but shoddy. The excellence in service which people have been taught to expect of "all wool" clothes is true only of virgin wool. When salespersons represent clothes as all wool the customer is led to expect the same qualities as from virgin wool. This is usually done without thought of misrepresentation but because the salesman does not know the difference. Such misrepresentation creates disappointment and breeds resentment when customers find that an "all

wool" suit does not come up to expectation. The term "all wool" may be truthfully used in describing some of the most spurious of shoddy fabrics but the term virgin wool can only mean unused fleece wool from the sheep's back.

Salespersons should tell the truth because it is right to be truthful. This is perhaps the highest consideration involved. The truth should be told attractively and with a sale in view. But if through ignorance or over-enthusiasm a salesman makes unjustified claims for goods or misrepresents their qualities, he may make one sale but the chances are that he will not make another to the same customer. The customer will probably regard the one instance of misrepresentation as the rule rather than the exception and will shun the store entirely thereafter. The average customer is shrewd, knows value and does not hesitate to go elsewhere if it is found that goods are not what they are represented to be. Salespersons should have firmly impressed upon them that it is far better to lose sales than to make them through deceit or misrepresentation.

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### Questions

1. What is the difference between character and reputation?
2. Why is the doing of one's duties in small things a training in character?
3. How is character undergoing constant changes?
4. Why is a good memory an aid in selling?
5. What is the relation between memory and attention?
6. Why is observation important in selling?
7. What are the requisites for the training of memory?
8. Why is it essential to remember names?
9. What is required to develop the faculty of remembering faces?
10. Describe the effect of sickness upon memory.

11. How does fatigue affect the memory?
12. In what way is misrepresentation poor salesmanship?
13. Why is it poor business to overload a customer?
14. What is the keynote in selling? Why?
15. State the proper attitude of salespersons toward customers.

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## CHAPTER X

### MENTAL FACTORS

**Friendly Relations with Customers.**—To know how to gain a friendly footing with a stranger is most important for a salesperson. Moreover, the ability is not difficult to acquire, provided the salesperson uses attentiveness and tact. Too many salespersons, however, fail to realize their responsibilities. They yield to their quite natural feeling of diffidence or awkwardness in addressing a stranger, and thereby make it hard for the customer to deal with them. Such shyness in retail selling is a serious hindrance to gaining the confidence of customers. Salespersons should try to cultivate friendly relations with store patrons, to make customers feel at home in the store and with the person who serves them. Customers do not like to deal with a stranger and to have to give afresh their names and addresses every time they come into a store.

Wherever it is practicable a customer's name and address should be memorized after the first sale. The next time, she should be greeted by name and if she has made a purchase and it is to be sent, the address should be written on the parcel or sales ticket without asking for the information. To do this is flattering to the customer. It tells her that the salesperson has thought enough of her trade to take the pains not only to remember her name but her address. It is an important step in winning her confidence and thus her permanent trade.

**How to Win the Confidence of Customers.**—Many persons shopping in strange stores are on the defensive because



they have a vague idea lurking in their minds that an attempt will be made to sell them more than is wanted or something that they do not desire at all. They feel that the store wants their money, and that the salespersons will make every effort to get it. This mental attitude can be broken down by making customers feel that they are regarded as friends and not strangers and that they are being served just because it is a pleasure to do so. When customers are treated in this way they soon feel on a sufficiently friendly footing to ask the advice and the candid opinion of the salesperson as to what to buy when doubts arise.

To be able to give competent advice, salespersons must know their goods, and by stating facts already known to customers the latter will be more ready to accept statements of unknown facts. Knowledge of the merits of the goods will enable the salesperson to create a desire for them and to judge of their suitability in a particular case. When interest is taken in the attractive features of the goods objections that might otherwise arise are forgotten.

As noted elsewhere, words, speech, and voice have an important bearing on winning the confidence of customers. In describing the goods, the words should be carefully chosen. While mechanical forms of phrase are undesirable, yet characteristic expressions necessarily fit certain merchandise and these should be stated distinctly and deliberately. Rapidity and haste in speaking distract attention. The customer, unable to follow a confused or indistinct relation of facts, becomes impatient.

**The Three Factors of Confidence.**—To be mentally at ease in their work salespersons must believe in the store, in its goods, and in themselves. If they lack confidence in the

store this will affect the results of their selling. They cannot impart a confidence to others which they do not possess themselves. If the store is not honest in its methods or if it is careless in the way it treats the public no time should be lost in looking for another position with a house that is rendering better service.

Confidence in the goods sold implies that all that is said about them is true. Salespersons cannot feel at ease when trying to sell goods they do not believe in, and which they would not buy themselves if their position and that of the customer were reversed.

Finally, a salesperson needs to have confidence in himself, in order to make a strong impression upon others. Self-confidence is based upon sincerity, and unless we impress others with our sincerity they will not believe what we say. There is something in the bearing of sincere persons that instantly proclaims itself. They carry themselves erect, look you straight in the eye, and speak with a voice that is direct and authoritative. They are sure of themselves and without apparent effort command the attention, approval, and confidence of others.

Confidence in self is something that can be developed. Salespersons should analyze their successes and their failures and try to learn the reason for their lack of belief in themselves.

**The Power of Concentration.**—Salespersons should develop the power of concentration. Concentration consists in focusing all one's mental strength upon the task in hand. It is an essential factor in selling. The brain can generate just so much power and no more. If that power can be controlled, concentrated, and applied to one subject at a

time, it will accomplish great tasks, but if the thought is allowed to wander, the mental power is so diffused that little is accomplished. A good way to test the power of concentration is to listen to a speech or lecture, and note for how long at one time you can shut out other thoughts and give your whole attention to the words of the speaker.

The sort of concentration which the salesperson needs to develop is close attention to the subject under consideration due to a deliberate effort of will. The mind's power is focused on one thing at a time. Concentration in its final analysis is simply a matter of will-training.

Every time a person makes a determined effort to control his thought and force the brain to work upon the subject in mind, the will is strengthened and automatic concentration is made easier. To acquire the habit of concentration a determined effort should be made day after day to keep the thought fixed on the work in hand. Salespersons should concentrate their entire thought upon customers and goods. To be able to do this is one of the secrets of successful salesmanship.

**Enthusiasm.**—Enthusiasm is the dynamo of personality. Without it, what abilities a person may possess lie dormant. You may have knowledge, sound judgment, and good reasoning powers, but no one will know it until you put heart into your thought and action. Enthusiasm has always been back of every great human achievement. As the late Charles B. Loomis remarked, "With all your getting, get enthusiasm. And when you get it, spread it!"

The source of the word "enthusiasm" is a Greek word meaning "inspired," and it still carries with it the underlying suggestion of inspiration. A person filled with enthusiasm

moves and acts from the center of his being. There is a wonderful power in rightly directed enthusiasm which serves not only to arouse one's own full powers, but also tends to impress others. Enthusiasm is nothing more or less than faith in action. Faith and initiative combined work marvels.

Ralph Waldo Emerson once said, "Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm." This statement is true in selling. No salesperson ever made a success without enthusiasm. Hugh Chalmers once remarked that a salesperson might have honesty, health, ability, knowledge of business, tact, sincerity, industry, and open-mindedness but without enthusiasm such a person could be only a statue. Enthusiasm is the white heat that fuses all other qualities into an effective mass. This vital force in every path of life is a fundamental requirement for efficient selling.

The salesperson who is brimming over with enthusiasm can make contact even with the customer who is a habitual grouch. Customers like to patronize a store where enthusiasm in the form of courtesy, interest, and helpfulness is manifest.

**Cultivation of Loyalty.**—In generating the driving force of enthusiasm, loyalty is an essential requisite. Salespersons who are not loyal to their store can render only half-hearted service, and cannot be enthusiastic in their work. Selling without interest is like a ship sailing without a rudder. It is aimless drifting. The salesperson becomes a burden to himself and to the store and it is time to seek another vocation in which an interest can be taken.

**Imaginative Thinking.**—Imagination is required to depict or think of the use of things in different connections, as when

deciding whether or not an article is suitable for the use desired by the customer. It is frequently necessary to make a mental picture of the use of the article under the given circumstances—for example, to picture a room and its furnishings—to decide whether or not an article will harmonize well with the surroundings. Imagination is of special importance in selling millinery and clothing. To decide if a certain color will blend or be becoming the salesperson must be able to make a mental image of the dress with which it is to go. Many instances may be cited when the lack of imagination means a serious handicap in selling.

**Limitations of Imagination.**—The imaginative faculty can be developed and its cultivation should constitute one of the aims of salesmanship training. What may be done to give this training? Images are the materials upon which imagination works. Nothing can even enter the imagination, the elements of which have not first come into our experience and then been conserved for future use in the form of images. The Indians never dreamed of a heaven where streets are paved with gold, and where a great white throne stands in the center. Their experience had given them no knowledge of these things, and so they had to build their heaven out of the images which they had at command, namely, those connected with the chase and the forest. So their heaven was the “happy hunting-ground” inhabited by game and enemies over whom the blessed forever triumphed. This does not mean that the imagination cannot construct an object which has never before been in a person’s experience as a whole, for the work of the imagination is to do precisely this thing. It takes the various images at its disposal, and builds them into wholes which may never have existed

before, and which may exist now only as a creation of the mind. But in the new product there can be not a single element which was not familiar before in the form of an image of one kind or another. The form is new but the material is old.

**How to Develop the Imaginative Faculty.**—It is not hard to see what must be done to cultivate the imagination. In the first place care must be exercised in securing a large and usable stock of images. Knowledge of goods is the first essential. This should include a mastery of raw materials out of which goods are made, the processes of manufacture, and their uses. The second and third essentials are—knowledge of the principles underlying human nature, and the ability to apply these principles to the customer; knowledge of the steps of a sale and how to carry a customer successfully through each step. Again, images may be increased through reading good books, good magazines, and good newspapers. Salespersons should choose their reading carefully and pick out the best. They should use every precaution to keep their minds filled with wholesome images. Immoral images serve as a disease and may partially or wholly destroy the imaginative faculty. A mind filled with immoral images is of little service to anyone.

The imagination is not limited by the number of images which salespersons have at their command, but by their constructive ability. A person might own brick, stone, and mortar for a new building but the building would not materialize if he were unable to construct it. Many salespersons have a rich store of desirable images yet are unable to muster their images in such a way that helpful new products are obtainable from them. Persons with minds of this type

never reveal initiative and enterprise but remain in the ranks of the routine workers.

**Memory and Constructive Power.**—A good memory and constructive ability are two essential factors for a good imagination. A salesperson must often think of a new method of handling customers from past experiences. No two customers are alike and often in order to make the desired impression, arguments must be changed and selling points must be presented in fresh ways a dozen times during a day. Frequently, a salesperson is required to arrange old images in new combinations to meet new situations. This not only requires a good stock of images, ready at hand for use, but demands an alert mental activity, as well as good constructive power. Salespersons should realize the close relationship that exists between imagination and successful selling.

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### Questions

1. What is the place of confidence in retail selling?
2. Mention various ways of securing and maintaining the confidence of customers.
3. What is the first step in winning the confidence of customers?
4. Why should care be exercised in words, speech and voice?
5. In what three things should a salesperson have confidence?  
Why?
6. How may confidence in self be developed?
7. What is concentration and how may it be attained?
8. Why is enthusiasm the dynamo of personality?
9. What is the source of enthusiasm?
10. Why is loyalty an essential requisite for enthusiasm?
11. Why is selling without interest aimless drifting?
12. What is imagination?

13. Why is imagination a requisite to successful selling?
14. How may imagination be cultivated and developed?

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## CHAPTER XI

### SERVICE

**Service the Shopping Magnet.**—The general purpose of the retail store is to sell merchandise to the mutual benefit of both store and customers. One of the most valuable assets any store can possess is the good-will and friendship of customers. Good-will and friendship depend more upon service than upon any other factor. Where prices are the same in competing stores, competition has forced the problem of service to the foreground, and it is now recognized that the salesperson and the service rendered decide the estimate the customer forms of the store. Perhaps the store that is the more convenient to Mrs. Smith's residence is not the one where she shops, and she goes to the further store, not because its goods are better quality but because its service is the magnet. This service makes shopping there a pleasure.

**How to Greet Customers.**—Store service may be increased by paying attention to creating a favorable first impression. When salespersons are not waiting upon customers the opportunity should be taken to arrange the stock, keeping it tidy, neatly arranged, and displayed to the best advantage; but such close attention should not be given to these tasks that an approaching customer is not noticed. It is a good plan to attend to the stock with one eye on the aisle. Customers do not like to approach a counter and find the salesperson's back turned to them, or be compelled to wait before their presence is noticed. Therefore, as soon as a

customer is seen approaching the counter, the salesperson, if arranging merchandise, should discontinue the work and go forward immediately. There should be no haste in the advance, or this may suggest that the salesperson is too eager to make the sale. The customer should be courteously received with a bow of recognition, and a smile, and if possible by name. While serving a customer it is bad form to lean on the counter or against a shelf. Customers do not like lazy salespersons. Salesmen should not have their coats off and sleeves rolled up. Such a free-and-easy appearance distracts attention.

In first addressing a customer such expressions as "Something?" or "Did you want to be waited on?" should be avoided. It may be assumed that the customer wants something or she would not be in the store. The first few words demand care in expression so that they create a favorable impression. A salesperson should size up his customer and say and do first what he thinks the customer will like best. If a customer approaches to be served and the salesperson is busy waiting upon another, some form of recognition should be given. Such a remark as "I will be free in a minute," or "I will serve you directly," should be made. A customer does not like to wait at the counter and not be recognized while the salesperson is waiting upon someone else. As already emphasized, customers should be taken always in order and no preference should be shown.

**True Description of Goods.**—A sale is not complete unless it is to the entire satisfaction of the buyer and to the best interest of the seller. The customer's satisfaction is made up of the several factors of quality of goods, services given by the goods during use, services rendered by the

merchant and services rendered by the sales force. A prominent merchant once gave this advice to his store staff, "You must remember that once a customer is not necessarily always a customer, and that the staying qualities of your customer depend very much upon what is given in addition to the goods."

Merchants should exercise care in offering for sale only goods of the highest grade and quality. The reputation of handling goods of a high grade only is a valuable asset for any store and it should be the aim of every merchant to win this reputation. In describing goods only their true qualities, and the actual services they will render should be stated.

**Knowledge of Goods.**—Courteous service demands among other things a careful knowledge of sizes. If selling infants' or children's wear, it is essential to know the sizes of clothing for different ages. Salespersons should not be allowed to sell these goods until they have the information at their finger ends. Ignorance is the cause of embarrassment and frequently leads to the loss of a good customer.

A customer approached the counter in the infant-wear department and asked the saleswoman: "What size cap do you think I need for a three months' old baby?"

The saleswoman did not know and answered: "Just a moment, madam, and I will ask someone." She soon returned with the information and showed the customer the correct size.

"Do you sell these little padded cap linings for summer caps, too?" the young mother inquired again.

"I am not sure, madam, but I will find out for you."

Presently she returned and said: "She says most mothers find them too warm for summer but we have lawn cap linings."

"Yes, that sounds more sensible. Suppose you show me them."

"I will find out where they are kept," the saleswoman replied.

The customer, by this time thoroughly impatient, simply said, "No, you need not mind. I will not trouble you any more."

This experience conveys the lesson of the foolishness of attempting to sell when the information is lacking which is necessary to give service. To render successful service salespersons must be able to determine the fitness of the goods for the purposes required. Thus, if a salesman is selling cloth he must know whether it is suitable for dress-goods or suiting; for a young, middle-aged, or old person, for working, house, street, or reception wear, or whether it can be used for anything else appropriately. Such knowledge as this is absolutely necessary in advising a customer as to what goods will give satisfaction.

**Service Features that Attract Customers.**—Competition in service has induced many merchants to try to attract customers to their stores by offering certain comforts and conveniences. In large stores, these service features have been developed on a large scale and the following is a list of those established in recent years:

1. Writing- and reading-rooms furnished with stationery, magazines, newspapers, a dictionary, and directories of the city and near-by towns.
2. A restroom, furnished with easy chairs and lounges where customers may rest.
3. A nursery where children may be left in competent charge while the mothers are shopping.
4. A playground, equipped with sand piles, swings, and

amusements of different kinds to attract and amuse children.

5. Wheeled chairs for the use of invalids.
6. Parcel-checking stations.
7. A branch of the public library.
8. Elevators, and public telephones.
9. Post-office.
10. Free delivery of purchases.
11. A telegraph and cable office.
12. A place where customers may go on rainy days to dry their skirts.
13. Boys at entrance to take charge of umbrellas.
14. A service information bureau whose activities may include the purchase of theater, railroad, and steamship tickets, the calling of messengers and taxis, furnishing store guides and shopping assistants, and giving information of various kinds.
15. In some of the larger stores there is an auditorium where concerts and other entertainments of a high grade are given.

In addition to some or all of the above facilities, restaurants, barber shops, shoe-polishing stands, manicuring and shampooing parlors, and tearooms are sometimes maintained for the convenience of the public, often with little profit to the store. A person may spend an entire day in some of our large retail establishments with pleasure and profit without the purchase of a single article. As advertising and as a means of attracting and holding customers these service features usually prove a good investment.

**Waiting for Change.**—An important detail of service is that both package and change should be received at the same

time. If a customer receives her money and then must wait for her package, or if her change is not ready when the package is received she grows impatient. As short a time as possible should elapse between the sale and the delivery of the wrapped parcel and change. Customers have been heard more than once to say, "I will not go to that store to-day because I am in a hurry and it is necessary to wait so long to be waited upon and then you have to wait for your parcel." The alert salesperson may make any necessary waiting seem shorter by showing other merchandise, or may direct the talk to articles in other parts of the store. This distracts attention and makes the time pass pleasantly. The customer should not be left to her own devices as soon as her money is received and the goods are sent to be wrapped. Such lack of attention is usually noticed, and suggests that the salesperson is only interested in making the sale and not in giving service.

**Checking of Goods.**—The proper delivery of goods plays an important part in the customer's satisfaction. This service may be divided into the stages of:

1. Making out sales slips.
2. Care that goods purchased are sent.
3. Careful packing of goods.
4. Delivery in time specified.
5. Courtesy and efficiency on the part of delivery boys.

Too much care cannot be taken to see that no mistakes are made. If they are made they should receive prompt attention and correction. The customer's correct name, correctly spelled with the correct street address is the first essential. It displeases many people to have their names misspelled,

and oftentimes goods are delayed by mistakes in addresses. Carelessness in these matters annoys customers and makes them dissatisfied with the store's service. The second essential is to make sure that the goods and sizes bought are sent. In stores where the service is carelessly handled one size of an article may be bought and another sent. This causes delay and annoyance and is a serious reflection on the store management and the character of the help employed. Carelessness is costly in any business but no form of mistake is more annoying than for a customer to receive something that is useless or not wanted.

**Packing and Wrapping.**—A serious reflection on store service is the delivery of goods in a crumpled, wrinkled, or soiled condition. This carelessness may be caused either by faulty packing, or by rough and careless handling by the delivery force. Goods should be packed neatly in a clean package, in a way that prevents wrinkling or damage of any kind, and should be delivered in good condition. Employees often fail to give the necessary time to wrapping a parcel neatly and to the adequate protection of the goods. Oftentimes too much paper is used and the parcel is made bulky and inconvenient to carry. A neatly wrapped parcel suggests care in more important things. Carelessness on the part of packers, wrappers, and delivery boys is a frequent cause of complaints of poor store service. The management should see that goods are properly wrapped, and boys and girls who wrap parcels should be carefully trained. If delivery is expected or has been promised by a certain time or date the promise should be kept. Customers lose their patience when they are kept waiting for something they need, or when they remain at home waiting for an

article which is not delivered at the promised time. If such an article is sent C. O. D. it is often refused when it arrives later, the customer having meanwhile bought elsewhere. If the article is paid for, the customer will probably do her shopping in the future at a store where promises are kept.

**The Delivery of Goods.**—The manners of delivery boys are frequently a cause of annoyance and may spoil service that is good in all other respects. Violent ringing of the bell or loud rapping, delivery at the wrong place, parcels left with elevator boys or janitors who do not deliver them promptly, impatience when customers are examining parcels before acceptance, rude comments if a parcel is refused—these are forms of discourteous and sometimes insulting service. A frequent source of complaint is the delivery boy's part in the C. O. D. system. The boy usually carries little or no change, and often is discourteous when a bill is presented for payment. Again if only a nickel or dime is due in change many try to obtain it for themselves by pretending that they do not possess change, and will even give hints for a present of the small amount. Cases are not unknown where boys when in a hurry do not take time to climb stairs but mark packages "Not at home" and return them to the store. All these acts annoy customers and frequently cause them to trade elsewhere. A discourteous delivery boy may be the cause of a loss per week in sales which would equal in profits several times his salary. The service of the store does not end until the right goods are properly delivered and time has proved that the merchandise answers to the description under which it was sold.



### Questions

1. What is the chief purpose of a retail store?
2. What in the main distinguishes one store from another?
3. State the two divisions of service.
4. What are the requisites for creating a favorable first impression?
5. Why should care be exercised in the opening remarks to a customer?
6. What factors comprise satisfaction?
7. Why should the benefits of a sale be mutual?
8. Why should salespersons present only the true qualities of goods?
9. Why does service often require a knowledge of sizes?
10. Mention several forms of service features offered in stores. Why are these important?
11. Why should package and change be received at the same time?
12. What is the relation between proper delivery of goods and satisfaction?
13. Mention several causes of dissatisfaction that arise from inefficient delivery service.
14. How may delivery boys cause dissatisfaction?

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## CHAPTER XII

### KNOWLEDGE OF GOODS

**Importance of Knowledge about Goods.**—One aspect of salesmanship today is the giving of expert advice concerning goods and their uses. It is impossible for salespersons to give this advice unless they know their goods thoroughly, and also know how to impart this knowledge to others in an interesting manner. The effect in securing the confidence of customers in the wares shown to them is valuable. When buyers are convinced that the person selling the goods knows what he is talking about, they believe the arguments put forth on behalf of their sale. Salespersons may be magnetic, possess a good personality, know how to handle customers, and be masters of the art of carrying customers through the different mental stages of a sale, but they will not become efficient in selling without a thorough knowledge of their goods. A deficiency in this respect shows in speech and manner and is soon recognized by the customer. On the other hand it should be understood that a knowledge of the goods alone is of little value. Successful salesmanship makes many demands upon the mental faculties and requires the all-round development of personality.

Knowledge of the goods offered for sale frequently enables a seeming disadvantage to be turned into an advantage. "Is this all wool?" a customer inquires. "No, madam, it is not," replies the alert salesperson, "but the small percentage of cotton gives it a great tensile strength and it will wear longer than wool." Salespersons should carry the study of their

goods to the point where they know everything about the merchandise that may be of the slightest interest to others. Customers always like to learn something about the things they buy and are impressed by the knowledge of a person who gives evidence of being well informed.

**Knowledge of Well-Informed Cotton-Goods Salesmen.—**

A salesperson to be well-informed must know all that can be learned about the stock, not simply its arrangement in drawers or on shelves and its price, but also its history, manufacture, and essential characteristics or selling points. Take, for example, cotton. Cotton is of more value to mankind than any of the other textiles because of its cheapness, its serviceability, and its varied uses. The materials made from it range from the finest threads, mulls, and laces to heavy blankets and sail-cloths. Its value is increased by its resemblance to linen, wool, or silk, after special treatment by which warmth and attractive appearance are gained at simple cost. The salesperson employed in the cotton-goods department of a big store should make a study of raw cotton, the countries where it is grown, how it is planted and cultivated, how gathered, ginned, and so on. Here are a few facts of interest relating to cotton:

The portion of the cotton plant used in making thread, cloth, etc., consists of the hairs which protect the seeds. It is called a surface fiber to distinguish it from the stem fibers of the flax. While growing, the fiber is cylindrical in form, but as it dries, it twists, and when fully ripe is like a narrow twisted ribbon. This characteristic gives strength to the fibers when made into yarn. To make strong yarn requires a fiber of at least three-fourths of an inch.

The cotton plant may be annual, biennial, or perennial.

It is an annual in the United States where the plants grow to the height of from four to six feet. In South America and India a more tree-like cotton grows. Cotton ripens at different times, and a plant may contain at one time mature cotton bursting out, together with developing bolls, flowers, and opening buds. These are a few of the interesting facts about the cotton plant and the raw product.

**Facts About Manufacture of Cotton.**—The different processes of manufacture should also be understood and the following are a few interesting facts relating thereto.

Cotton yarns are spun or twisted in various ways and are used for warp, knitting yarn, sewing thread, and for hand embroidery. After the yarn is spun on the frame or mule it is usually doubled and twisted before it is ready for service. There are many ways of doing this, and the yarn may be dry-twisted or twisted in water. Knitting yarns have special twists. They may be spun on the mule, doubled and twisted slightly, with the resulting soft appearance and woolly surface found in some classes of underwear. Again they may be closely twisted in water, dyed, singed, glazed, and hard-finished to produce lisle. How many persons selling lisle stockings know how they are made? Yet the full knowledge could be acquired by half an hour's reading.

**How Cotton Goods are Mercerized.**—Mercerized goods are familiar to the average housewife yet few persons selling the goods could give an intelligent answer to the question: What is mercerizing? The discovery of the process was more or less accidental. In 1844, John Mercer, an English cotton printer was experimenting on cotton goods by treating them with caustic soda in order to make them shrink. Accident-

ally, he discovered that the cotton not only shrank under the process, but that it also acquired a peculiar luster. Owing chiefly to the high price of caustic soda the discovery had little commercial value until thirty years later. To obtain a high degree of luster the best quality of cotton is required. The fiber is generally combed and gassed to remove protruding ends and render it more silky. The material, suitably prepared, is carried under tension on rollers through the mercerizing solution, which consists of caustic soda at a temperature not exceeding 68 degrees Fahrenheit. About 1899, the Germans discovered that by adding certain chemicals to the alkaline solution they could give cotton yarn a luster almost equal to that of silk. After a few minutes in the alkaline solution the material, still under tension, is washed in fresh and acidified water. It has been found that the brilliancy and durability of the luster is increased by alternately releasing and taking up the tension while the material is in the alkaline solution. Mercerized cotton gains in weight and in tensile strength, and the affinity for dyestuffs is materially increased.

**Interesting Properties of Cotton.**—The following are a few properties of cotton that are of interest to all housewives:

1. Cotton burns easily on account of its natural oil and its cellulose nature. When cotton is nitrated it is highly inflammable and is used for gun cotton.

2. Cotton absorbs water slowly and does not give it up quickly, consequently it remains damp a long time.

3. Cotton crushes and creases easily and needs frequent pressing. The surface of napped goods and blankets easily flattens down, and takes on a rough, shabby look unless often brushed and shaken.

4. Cotton soils readily on account of the numerous fine hairs protruding from the yarn.
5. Cotton shrinks in water and in certain chemicals.
6. Cotton is a better conductor of heat than wool or silk, consequently when thin it is a satisfactory summer garment.
7. The elasticity of cotton is less than either silk or wool, therefore the thread breaks more readily when subjected to pressure.

**Facts as to Silk Culture.**—The salesperson in charge of the silk-goods counter should know that as far back as history tells, the Chinese were rearing silkworms and weaving silken garments. Silk weaving was considered so precious an art that to take the silkworm eggs out of the country was punishable by death. Two monks are supposed to have smuggled some eggs to the Emperor Justinian in the hollow of their bamboo staffs. So from that time, 555 A.D., silk growing and weaving began to spread through the Mediterranean countries first to Greece and Syria, then to Spain and the Moors, and finally to Italy and France. In America the early colonists gave some attention to the raising of the silkworms. Today China, Japan, Italy, and France lead the world in the production of raw silk.

Many species of caterpillars produce silk. The silk of commercial use comes chiefly from a domesticated variety, sometimes called the mulberry silkworm. Caterpillars when hatched are grubs about as large as the head of a pin, with an insatiable appetite for mulberry leaves. At first they merely suck the sap of the leaves provided for them, but later they gnaw the edges with their semi-circular jaws which move sideways. The noise of millions of full-grown worms eating the leaves is like the sound of rain. At first, about thirty

meals a day are eaten, for the worms are gluttons and eat their own weight daily. During the short life of a little over a month, the worm increases its length at least thirty times and its weight perhaps ten thousand. To allow for this rapid growth, it throws off its old skin four times and puts on a new and larger skin. When maturity is reached, the worm is almost three inches long, velvety white in appearance, and has nine breathing pores that look like black spots down each side of its body. Now it stops eating, and the restless movement of the head shows that it is ready to spin. On the brush or twigs provided for the purpose it throws out fastening threads and begins to spin its cocoon.

**The Cocoon and Chrysalis Stages.**—The thread that forms the cocoon comes out of an opening near the mouth and is really two filaments held together by a gummy coating. Back and forth the worm throws its thread somewhat in the form of a “figure eight” until three days later it has enclosed itself in the cocoon and is changing into a chrysalis. After fifteen to twenty days spent in this state, the chrysalis changes into a moth which moistens the end of the cocoon and tries to break its way out. The silk of the cocoon is broken as the moth emerges and is lessened in commercial value. To prevent this the cocoons are heated sufficiently to kill the chrysalis and only those moths are allowed to emerge that are intended for reproduction. The moth is cream white and almost an inch long. It lives only three days and during that time the female moves scarcely three inches and lays several hundred eggs. The eggs are so small that about forty thousand weigh only an ounce. The moths usually lay the eggs on sheets of paper or pieces of muslin provided for the purpose, to which they are held fast by a slightly gummy



liquid which comes from the moth. The sheets or cloths are hung for a few days in a damp atmosphere and then placed in cold storage for almost six months, the period of cold being advantageous for later hatching. In the spring, when the leaves of the early mulberry are ready to unfold, the eggs are brought from cold storage and placed in heated compartments where the temperature is kept at about 75 degrees Fahrenheit. The period of incubation occupies about thirty days, though this time can be shortened considerably by the action of electric discharges.

The two prime requisites for good silk are fresh mulberry leaves and careful choice of eggs. The cocooneries in which the worms are reared are clean, well-ventilated, roomy, and quiet, for the silkworm is a difficult creature to rear, sensitive to noise and subject to disease.

**Properties of Silk.**—A few properties of silk which it is advisable for every user of the textile to know, are the following:

1. Pure silk will last for years even though given hard wear.
2. The tensile strength is almost one-third that of the best iron wire.
3. Silk sheds dust, and experiment has shown that germ-life does not increase as rapidly on it as on some of the other textiles.
4. The gloss of silk is easily destroyed by careless washing; hard rubbing breaks the filament, weakens the material, and takes away the luster.
5. Silk is easily scorched.
6. The crisp, crunching sound associated with silk is a quality natural with some silks. It is lost under some treat-

ments and restored by a bath in dilute acetic acid and drying without washing.

The silk salesperson will often have the opportunity to give advice as to how to treat and use silk. The advice will not only be thankfully received, but will tend to increase the respect of the customer for the knowledge and ability of the person serving behind the counter.

**Properties of Linen.**—The following information regarding the properties of linen is of value to the linen salesperson:

1. Water evaporates quickly from linen, which makes it valuable for toweling, handkerchiefs, and wash cloths. This property makes linen feel cool when worn next to the skin.

2. When properly laundered, it easily gives up its dirt and continues to be white and clean even after long service.

3. Linen thread is strong and the weaving qualities of linen are excellent when the fiber is pure.

4. Linen is more penetrable by air than cotton, and this adds to its feeling of coolness.

5. It is possible to spin the flax until it is almost like a hair and yet retain strength. The delicate linen threads for the finest lace are spun by hand in damp cellars where the eye cannot see the filament but the fingers can feel it.

6. The luster of the finest linen is almost as high as silk.

7. Linen does not take or hold the dye well. Dress linens are nevertheless dyed in many colors but are not always satisfactory.

8. Linen fabrics are less flexible than cotton of equal thickness, and retain their shape better if free from dressing. This quality recommends linen for shirt bosoms, and for tablecloths and napkins.

**Tests for Textile Fabrics.**—The following tests regarding textile goods constitute useful knowledge for salespersons who handle fabrics and garments of any kind.

The tensile strength of any material may be tested by holding firmly with the thumb and fingers of each hand, and pulling the material straight out, first warp way and then filling way. If it tears or frays in either direction it shows a lack of strength. The tearing test is often used to tell the difference between linen and cotton. Linen quickly torn will leave straight, smooth threads along the edge of the tear but cotton will curl up.

An easy test for wool, cotton, linen, and silk is the burning test. Wool burns steadily, goes out quickly, leaves a gummy residue and has a disagreeable odor. Cotton burns quickly, is difficult to blow out and often continues to smoulder until all is consumed. There is no disagreeable smell. Linen burns much like cotton but is not so inflammable. The fibers of pure silk when burning curl up and emit a strong odor like that given off by burning hair.

The sizing test is important. Goods may be made of poor material yet after dressing and finishing may look like good quality. Closely woven cottons and linens are often filled with sizing and become unsatisfactory after a few washings. It is important to tell the difference between genuine and treated goods. The tongue can often detect sizing or the nail can remove it, showing the coarse texture below. Sizing may be discovered by briskly rubbing the material between the hands to see if the surface dressing will rub off; or it may be removed by a thorough boiling. Glycerin causes linen to appear transparent but does not have this effect on cotton. Singed ends of linen thread appear even and compact while cotton thread spreads out like a paint brush.

**Information about Laundering.**—The following information about laundering should be known in order that it may under certain circumstances be given to customers.

Strong soap hardens and shrinks woollens, turns white silks yellow, and removes color in colored materials. Rubbing wears all fabrics, hardens woollens, gives silk a rough look and injures color. Sunlight bleaches and whitens white cotton and linen materials, hardens and shrinks woollens and fades color. Sudden changes in temperature harden and shrink woollens. Anything hotter than lukewarm water injures silk and may change or remove color from any fabric.

There is no commodity but has an interesting story connected with it, from the time of the growth of the raw material through the different processes of production, until it is finished and ready for use. Customers are almost always eager for information about what they are purchasing and information concerning practically every line of goods is not difficult to secure. Many books are published explaining the nature of raw materials and the various processes of production. Many manufacturers loan films and pictures showing all the stages of production of the goods they manufacture. Frequently a merchant may secure the loan of these films with no other charge than the express charges. These films should be secured and shown to the salespersons selling the goods. Magazines of various kinds devote much space to explaining methods of manufacture. Merchants should encourage salespersons to visit factories and closely observe the different processes of manufacture. Salespersons should not be afraid to consult and question the representatives of the manufacturer, who are usually specialists and able to give much valuable information.

### Questions

1. Why is selling ability dependent upon a knowledge of the goods?
2. What is the relation between salesmanship and expert advice?
3. What is the result of a lack of knowledge of the goods?
4. What are the two prime considerations to be taken into account in knowledge of goods?
5. What are the important facts that should be known about cotton?
6. What are mercerized goods?
7. Mention properties of cotton that will interest customers.
8. What are the important facts that should be known about silk?
9. Mention properties of silk that will interest customers.
10. Mention properties of linen that are of interest to customers.
11. Mention tests for wool, cotton, linen, and silk.
12. Mention facts about laundering that will interest many customers.
13. What constitutes magnetism in salespersons?
14. What facts about weaving should a salesperson of fabrics know?
15. How may sizing be detected?

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## CHAPTER XIII

### GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

**Rules and Policies.**—In addition to a thorough knowledge of the goods the sales clerk handles, it is necessary to have a fund of general information. First of all there should be full and exact knowledge of the rules and regulations of the store, which should be kept not only in letter but in spirit. Salespersons should realize that rules are devised for the good of the business as a whole as determined by the experience of the management.

The customs and traditions of the business should also be studied. Its employees should know how their store compares with competing stores of the locality, not only as to class of customers but also as to the quality of goods, delivery system, and general service. They should know what unusual buying or selling facilities their own store has to offer; what are the facilities of the credit office, the adjustment bureau, the delivery system and so on. This fund of general information is a necessary part of a clerk's mental equipment so that he may be able to give an intelligent answer to the customer should the information be sought. The delivery system, for instance, may cover regular routes; the store may be willing to make adjustments and exchanges; or it may maintain an order department by telephone for the convenience of customers. These facts may not be known to customers and unless salespersons are informed about them, their advantages cannot be brought to the attention of customers.

**Knowledge of Advertising.**—Another phase of store policy which salespersons should carefully follow is the advertising of the business. They should keep themselves informed as to when specially advertised articles are offered for sale. A store recently advertised a lace sale and stated that the bargains to be offered marked an epoch in merchandising. On the morning of the sale a customer asked, "Where is the lace that is on sale?" "I am sure I don't know, madam," the saleswoman answered. The customer concluded that the sale was not of much importance if the saleswoman did not know about it and left the store without making further inquiry. That customer, in the future, would be likely to discredit the truth of the store's advertising. Advertising alone will not sell goods. It is only a method of interesting the public in what is on sale. Salespersons are responsible for turning advertising inquiries into sales. When they show the goods advertised they should know without hesitation the selling points of the merchandise and present them in an effective way. If salespersons know just what is advertised, and how the price at which it is to be sold compares with the previous figure their alertness suggests that they are well posted on their goods and that the bargain is a genuine offer. Sales are often lost because the salespersons do not know and do not interest themselves in what is advertised. It is true that certain stores require the sales staff to read all the advertising and sign it, as proof that they are well informed on this matter, but frequently the reading is little more than a glance. If salespersons have the welfare of their store at heart, it will not be necessary to force the reading of advertisements upon them.

Every intelligent person makes a point of reading the best daily newspapers so as to be well informed upon the chief topics



of the day. This knowledge enables him to reach a common point of interest when conversing with others. Salespersons should be so well informed that they can talk intelligently about matters of current public interest. It is not necessary to open the conversation but when questions or comments are made they should be able to make an intelligent reply.

**Goods Known by Different Names.**—Salespersons should learn the different names for the same article. If asked for something of which they have never heard, they should inquire if it is in stock under another name before the customer is told that the store does not carry the article. The following experience of a correspondent of the *Boston Evening Transcript* illustrates the need of making inquiries concerning goods asked for if the name is not familiar.

The correspondent of the paper went one morning to buy a pair of overshoes in a department store. She asked for India rubbers. The young man whom she addressed replied promptly, "We don't carry them." The articles which she had all her life heard called India rubbers were displayed on the counter. She asked a second person but with the same result. Finally she met a salesman who understood what she wanted and brought another clerk to serve her.

The shopper continued on her trip of investigation and went to a store to buy some tooth-powder. She asked for camphorated chalk tooth-powder. The saleswoman said she had never seen or heard of such a thing, though she had often sold it over the same counter. Looking around over the stock the shopper found what she wanted and pointed it out to the saleswoman. The name printed on the wrapper was "camphorated tooth-powder" but although obviously made of chalk the word "chalk" was not printed.

Entering a third store she asked for a handkerchief for the neck. The saleswoman assured her not only that they had none, but that they never carried anything of that kind. Another saleswoman who happened to overhear the conversation knew exactly what was required. The first saleswoman then said, "If you had called it a scarf I should have known what you wanted."

On another occasion the correspondent went to buy a pair of slippers at one of the department stores. When the saleswoman was asked for a pair of low-heeled slippers of black suede to wear in the house, she replied that they had none of that kind as all their house slippers had heels. She showed the customer several pairs of heeled slippers covered with beads and various decorations which were quite unsuitable for the customer's purpose. The customer left the store and returned next day with an old slipper to show what she wanted. A salesman then informed her that what she called a house slipper was known as a bedroom slipper, and though it was perfectly suitable for parlor wear yet bedroom slipper was the proper name for it.

**Location of Stock.**—Every person serving behind a counter should be thoroughly acquainted with the location of the stock. The other day I went into a grocery store to buy a can of pepper. I took out my watch and timed the salesman. He went to a shelf and the pepper was not there, then to another place without success. Finally he asked another salesman and at the end of four minutes by actual count the pepper was found. Hundreds of instances similar to this occur in our stores daily. If a customer asks for an article, and its location is not known, doubts arise as to the store service and the capacity of the store's management.

In contrast, where a customer asks for an article and the salesperson without hesitating goes at once to its place and brings it, an impression of efficiency is created. Customers do not like to be waited upon by persons who are not familiar with their stock, its location, and its contents. It is a good plan for every clerk to study the location of the goods he or she handles so that as soon as an article is asked for there comes to the mind its exact location. When new goods are placed on the shelves or when stock is moved from one place to another, pains should be taken to memorize their whereabouts, so that the mention of the goods will cause their location to come to mind.

**Contents of Stock.**—In addition to knowing the different names for the same goods the salesperson should have a thorough knowledge of the contents of the stock. Frequently when a customer asks for something that is somewhat out of the way or in little demand, she is confronted with a puzzled salesperson who is not sure that the article is carried in stock and replies, "I must ask and find out." Spare moments should be utilized in arranging stock and in studying the different styles, color, and sizes of goods. Salespersons who do not take the time and trouble to learn the kind and sizes of the stock that they are selling are incompetent to serve behind a counter. In studying the stock it is important to find out:

1. What lines sell best and what show a tendency toward slowness.
2. Are any sizes, colors, or styles asked for but not carried? If so, are there sufficient inquiries to make it advisable to add the same to the stock?
3. How long each article has been in stock. This information is of importance to the buyer so that the shelves may not

become filled with slow-moving or old goods. If the salespersons keep the buyer informed as to what styles of goods are moving slowly this information will make it possible to make special efforts through advertising to dispose of the stock before it becomes so dead that it has to be sold at a loss.

**The Uses of Utility Articles.**—In the sales of household utilities and similar goods a knowledge of their uses is a necessity to bring out their merits. What is the article used for? What will it do? What will it not do? How long will it last? Why is it better than others? This information is necessary to sell customers what they want and to decide whether or not an article will give satisfaction. A customer approached a counter where silverware was sold and asked the saleswoman to show her something to hold cracked ice. She was shown a fern dish. The customer regarded this stupidity as an insult and left the store without purchasing. In a large department store a customer asked several questions of the salesman selling jardinières, pedestals, and a line of large china pieces, and to all her queries the answer was in the negative. Finally the customer became so annoyed at the ignorance of the clerk that she said, "If you do not know what I want to know why are you selling these things?"

**Knowledge of Competing Goods and Prices.**—A knowledge of competing goods is often important. A careful study of the literature given out by competitors explaining the chief qualities of their goods, enables salespersons to compare their own merchandise and methods with those of competitors. It is the duty of merchants to see that their salespersons receive such literature, and to emphasize the necessity of its careful

reading. When a customer mentions a competitor's goods the strong points of the store's own line should be brought to his attention, in as convincing and interesting a manner as possible, and the comparison of the merits of the two lines should always be left to the customer. Prices of competitor's goods should be known, and if they are lower, the reasons why. There need be no hesitation in explaining why competitors sell their goods cheaper. By intelligently emphasizing the superior qualities of their own goods, salespersons can convince the average customer that the merchandise is worth the price asked for it.

Salespersons should be familiar with the prices of their goods and try to quote them without referring to the price ticket. Goods and prices should be so associated in the mind that the mention of an article will recall the price. It requires a little effort at first, but when the memory is trained the knowledge gives the customer an impression of alertness and ability.

**Disparaging Competing Goods.**—Disparaging statements about goods not handled by the store should be avoided. Customers naturally become suspicious if competing goods are belittled in order to enhance the value of the store. To do this is termed "knocking." There is a difference between knocking and making fair comparisons. When a customer first alludes to a competitor's goods, the salesperson should draw attention to the superiority of his own goods rather than try to show that those of a competitor are of poor or inferior quality. It is good salesmanship to admit the good points of a competitor's goods and then draw attention to the merits of one's own.

To knock the goods that a customer happens to be using reflects upon her good judgment. It is poor salesmanship to

say to the customer; "You showed poor judgment in your previous buying." Customers do not like to be criticized in this indirect fashion and the less a salesperson reflects upon a customer's good judgment the better. An absolute rule in every store should be: Never abuse or slander a competitor or his goods. The practice loses customers as well as sales. An enterprising furniture firm of Kansas recently issued an attractive booklet. It had a very artistic cover and across the front was written: "What We Have to Say About Competitors." On the inside, the book contained a number of blank pages and nothing else.

**Knowledge of Color.**—Salespersons selling dress-goods, waists, ladies' suits, and millinery should have a good knowledge of color. As color makes or unmakes the wearer more than any other element of her attire, its effect should be studied. The following are a few facts about color that oftentimes prove helpful in the sale of garments and other articles of dress:

A pale complexion usually appears to better advantage with a warm hue, but the color must not be too dark or too intense. A well-proportioned figure with good lines need not be considered in the color scheme but extreme proportions need careful consideration. In general it is safe to say that a stout figure should never be clothed in fabrics having a bright texture, as the lustrous surface reflects the light and increases the effect of size. A shy, demure person may easily be made to appear overdressed if strong colors are used in her costume.

The hue of rather pale blue eyes may be strengthened by the right shade of blue in the dress. Colors may be chosen that give the skin clearness, while others will give brightness and better color to the hair. Sallow or pale persons should

not wear black unless very young. Gray is difficult for all to wear except those with clear, rosy complexions. Blue is the blessing of many American women, so much so that abroad they are known by their blue costumes. Bright red is stunning for evening wear when worn by some brunettes and dazzling blondes. Black is the color most commonly worn by stout women, but it has been found that subdued hues of violet-blue, blue-green, or taupe can also be worn successfully. It is not practicable to suggest a particular shade of color for a person without taking into account the texture of the fabric. Though the color may be good, the weave may destroy what might otherwise be a success.

**Things to Consider in Choosing Colors.**—In choosing colors for a costume, there are four factors to be considered:

1. A good combination of color.
2. The careful placing of colors selected.
3. The texture of the material.
4. The general becomingness of the color or colors to the wearer. To determine color combination and color value successfully, it is necessary to be familiar with the rules which govern them and to have much practice in their use.

A knowledge of color is also necessary for those who sell furniture, carpets, rugs, curtains, draperies, upholstery, wall-paper, men's suits, and hats. A good knowledge of color will increase selling efficiency in every one of these lines.

Style is a necessary factor in many goods. Salespersons selling such goods should be acquainted with the most up-to-date style in this country and abroad. A valuable asset is the ability to tell what style will be becoming to a customer.

This requires considerable study and the exercise of good judgment, but with practice a salesperson can acquire the ability to decide at a glance the style that will be becoming in a particular case.

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### Questions

1. Why is it necessary for salespersons to know the rules and regulations of the store?
2. What facts about the store should be known by all salespersons?
3. What facts about the advertisements of their store should salespersons know?
4. Why should salespersons read daily newspapers and trade journals of their own line?
5. Why is it necessary for salespersons to know location of stock and prices without consulting tags?
6. What facts concerning content of stock should be known by salespersons?
7. In what way may a salesperson keep the buyer informed of the moving of the stock?
8. Why should a salesperson know the uses of the article sold?
9. Why is a thorough knowledge of competing goods necessary?
10. What should be done when a customer states that the price of a competitor's goods is lower?
11. What is the effect of a salesperson knocking the goods of a competitor that a customer is using?
12. What salespersons should have a knowledge of color?
13. What facts about color should be known?
14. What salespersons should know styles? What facts should be known?
15. What is the difference between knocking and making fair comparisons?

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## CHAPTER XIV

### THE STUDY OF THE CUSTOMER

**The Position of the Customer.**—The life of a retail store depends for its existence upon the customers who patronize it, whose support contributes to the good of the salesperson individually as well as of the store. Numerous unwritten rules and the laws of barter and exchange as well as competition have given rise to the settled principle that the customer belongs to an independent and privileged class to which merchant and salesperson must bow. This principle must be recognized before the salesperson can realize the relationship that exists between himself and the customer.

The superintendent of a large department store in Boston once made clear this relationship in an address to a large group of apprentices. He said that as they were about to enter the employ of the store there was one very important thing that should be known and that was, who was the boss in the store. An eager girl answered; "Why, you are." He replied with emphasis that he was not the boss and asked for another answer. Several proclaimed a prominent member of the firm as the boss. He answered again, "No, he is not the boss. The boss in this store is the customer. It is for the customer that all engaged in the store are working. It is the customer that all should aim to please. The customer pays the wages, the salaries, and the interest on the money invested. The customers are the most important persons in the store and the chief aim of salesmanship is to please them."

**Why Customers are Lost.**—The president of a large mercantile establishment sent out letters to over two hundred people asking each to give the chief reason why a customer stopped trading at a store. One hundred and ninety-six replies were received, and they were tabulated and the answers classified in the following order:

47. Indifference of salespeople
24. Attempts at substitution
18. Errors
18. Tricky methods
17. Slow deliveries
16. Over-insistence of salespeople
16. Insolence of employee
13. Unnecessary delays in service
11. Tactless business policies
9. Bad arrangement of store
6. Refusal to exchange purchases
1. Poor quality of goods

Some of these errors of salesmanship occur daily in almost every store and those for which the salespersons are responsible will be discussed in the following chapters.

**Methods of Pleasing Customers.**—To please customers is the first principle of salesmanship. There is no better way by which they can be made permanent friends of the store than by honestly striving to attend to and to fulfill their wishes and desires in every legitimate way. A store's success depends upon the size of its clientele of permanent, friendly customers.

Friends may be made in various ways. One of the easiest and simplest of methods is illustrated by the following anecdote:

A young man entered a hardware store and asked for a can of varnish.

"What is it to be used for?" asked the salesman. "We have varnishes for different purposes."

"I wish to give my canoe a coating," was the reply.

"Well, then you want a varnish that will stand water. Have you entered for the regatta next week?"

"Yes," replied the young man with interest, "I am in the canoe race." A short conversation followed about canoeing and the regatta. The result was a permanent customer added to the list of patrons, and this was chiefly due to the interest taken in the customer's hobby by an alert salesman.

Another instance of how a little attention pleases and wins trade is the following:

Two young people accompanied by an elderly lady went into a drug store on a warm afternoon. They seated themselves at the soda fountain. The young people ordered ice-cream but the elderly lady did not wish for any. The clerk served them three glasses of water instead of two and took pains to start the electric fan over them.

Little acts of attention such as these are always appreciated and often lead to steady and permanent patronage.

**How to Greet Customers.**—It is a safe rule to greet a customer with a smile and a cheery "Good morning," and if possible, by name. Customers like to think that their patronage is appreciated and when they are addressed by name it signifies that the salesperson is interested in them, and this presupposes a desire to please and serve. A regular customer takes it as a matter of course to be addressed by name, but a person who is so addressed on the second visit is almost sure

to feel flattered by the small attention, and a little more at home in the store.

A prospective customer should be made to feel that he is welcomed as a friend to the store. How often is heard one of the following expressions—"What do you want?" "Well?" "What is it?" or "Waited on?"—the words frequently jerked out in an indifferent manner! A greeting of this sort, if it may be called a greeting, carries the suggestion that it is a trouble to wait on customers. It makes the atmosphere cold and frigid, and the customer feels not a welcome guest, but an intruder. An intelligent and businesslike woman on being asked to give her views regarding the greeting of customers said that she had frequently entered a store with the intention of making a purchase, and departed without doing so, simply because a salesperson had approached her in a grouchy attitude. "He acted as if he were sorry to see anyone enter the store, and as though waiting upon me were a disagreeable necessity." She further stated that one of the most pleasant experiences of shopping is to enter a store where the salespersons smile when they approach you, act as if they were pleased to see you, and make you feel that it is a privilege and a pleasure to be at your service.

**How to Dismiss a Customer.**—A bad impression may be left not only by failing to greet a customer properly but also through not knowing how to take leave of a customer. There should be nothing hurried or formal. It is far too rare, for instance, to have the customary "Thank you" said with such a whole-souled expression that the customer feels it is really meant. Parting words in reference to the purchase, emphasizing the durability, style, neatness, or some other quality, often send the customer away feeling satisfied and pleased.

"You will find this a very durable shoe," or "This hat is becoming," are statements that seem to show interest in the customers' satisfaction.

**The Mistake of Suggesting Dissatisfaction.**—Take, on the other hand, the expression that is frequently heard, "Now remember that these goods are guaranteed absolutely, and if you find them unsatisfactory bring them back." Such a method of dismissal is a mistake. There lingers in the mind the possibility of a defect and the desire to find one. A friend of mine bought a pair of socks guaranteed to wear a certain time without a hole; otherwise, they were to be returned and a new pair received in their place. He said that he expected somehow or other to find a flaw and nearly every night looked for some defect. The wearing qualities of the socks did not interest him as much as a probable defect. When, some time later, he bought another kind the salesman simply said, "You will find that these socks will give satisfaction." The thought of looking for a defect did not suggest itself to him. One merchant who formerly told his salespersons to make the guarantee the parting words, practically eliminated the come-back nuisance through instructing them to suggest a quality that would make the greatest appeal in the parting words to their customers.

**The Effect of Contradiction.**—Every person believes in the truth of his own opinion and feels within himself that his views are correct because they are a part of him. When asked to put them aside he is annoyed and argument rouses his anger and opposition. If a customer expresses an opinion, it is tactless and stupid to contradict what is said. Frequently a novice—and sometimes an older salesperson who

ought to know better—will argue a point, or attempt to rebut an objection raised by a customer. A prominent merchant recently remarked that he had instructed his salespersons never to argue with a customer. If a dispute arose the customer was to be given satisfaction and the complaint was to be looked up afterwards.

**Store Attitude Toward Customers.**—The store attitude toward the customer should resemble the attitude toward a guest in home life. If customers are treated as guests of the establishment the goal of perfection will be attained in store service. For a salesperson to comment upon the manner or dress of a customer, or to stare or laugh at some breach of etiquette or an inopportune question, is a tactless exhibition of bad manners. Again, to lose patience and to criticize the judgment or whim of a customer, or to offend either by implication or by direct statement, is evidence of lack of business common sense not to say politeness. It should be an ironclad rule not to discuss the whims and mannerisms of customers in the store or out. Such criticisms or comments may react injuriously upon the store, as illustrated by the following incident:

A saleswoman was attending a party at the home of a friend. During the course of the evening the subject of dress entered into the conversation. She criticized rather severely the extreme styles worn by a prominent young lady of the town who happened to be one of her best customers. A friend of the young lady heard what was said and carried the tale to the customer. The result was that the saleswoman lost a valuable patron and the store much profitable trade.

**How to Handle the Looker-on.**—In every large department store and in many of the smaller stores, customers like

to look around. These persons may be divided into two classes:

1. Those who have no intention of buying but may do so if some article is fancied.
2. Those who intend to buy at some time in the future but at present are just looking.

Many sales are made to people who have no intention of purchasing when entering a store. If a saleswoman approaches a customer who says that she does not intend to purchase anything but is simply looking around, she should not withdraw, but should wait to see if the shopper displays interest in anything in her department. Care should be taken, however, not to indicate to the customer that she is being watched or she will probably cut short her tour of inspection. The fact that one knows that one is being watched causes nervousness. Again, the customer must not know that the saleswoman is waiting for an opportunity to approach if she shows any special interest in an article. If a slight pause is made to inspect an article the customer should not be approached. But if a longer pause and a display of interest show that her attention has been definitely attracted, the saleswoman is justified in approaching with the object of being of service in some way. The blunt statement "Do you want this?" should never be used, as the reply will probably be "No," and the customer will get the impression that she was being urged to buy. The saleswoman should make some positive statement about the article, stating some quality that will appeal to the customer and increase the interest. Sales are frequently made in this way to people who have no intention of purchasing when entering a store, especially if the display of goods is attractive. Certain articles attract



attention and remind shoppers of their needs or their requirements in the near future. Salespersons should be certain that customers are interested, before proffering their services, and should not appear anxious to make a sale.

**Necessity of Buying Carefully.**—Many salespersons show impatience if a customer does not buy. They have the old notion that everyone who comes into a store to look it over should purchase something; if no purchase is made then looks, words, or actions express surprise and sometimes contempt. Many a good customer is driven away by such treatment. Store patrons are under no obligation to buy. They must first be convinced that the goods are what they need and the price is right. It should be remembered that it is necessary for the average person to buy carefully. It is estimated that 90 per cent or more of the merchandise sold over counters and through mail-order business is bought by people who must plan to save through economical buying. The average customer is driven by necessity to study values, to make comparisons, and to buy where best values and services are secured.

The looker of today may be the permanent customer of tomorrow, and the attitude of the salesperson should be as cordial and expressive of the same willingness to those who are inspecting the stock as to those who actually buy. In this age of keen competition all visitors to a store are possible customers and the retail business which discourages those shoppers who like to inspect and compare values is losing the probability of making many new customers in the future.

**The Shabbily Dressed Person.**—Dress should not make any difference in the attitude of salespersons towards cus-

tomers. The same courteous service should be given the shabbily dressed person as to the person dressed in the latest style. Dress does not necessarily tell the person's means or the quality of goods that may be purchased, as is shown by the following anecdote:

One rainy morning a lady dressed in a much worn suit, and with raincoat and hat to match, went into a department store to buy some lace for her daughter's wedding gown. She went to the lace counter and asked to see an expensive grade. The saleswoman showed an imitation. The lady said: "This is not what I want." "Why," said the saleswoman, "the real lace is expensive!" The lady turned and walked toward the entrance of the store. The saleswoman said nothing and began to replace her stock on the shelves. The owner of the store happened to meet the customer at the door. Noticing from her demeanor that something was the matter he asked her if he could be of service in any way. "I have just made up my mind never to enter your store again," she said. She explained her case. The merchant was profuse in his apologies and begged the customer to return and said that he would have another person serve her. She eventually bought a thousand dollars' worth of lace.

The mistake made by that thoughtless saleswoman is unfortunately typical of mistakes in the treatment of customers which are made every day throughout the stores of America. The well-trained salesperson is impartial and treats all customers, rich or poor, finely gowned or shabbily dressed, in the same courteous manner.

**Directing Customers to Departments.**—The direction of customers to the department which they are seeking is a matter requiring consideration in every store. Some shoppers

are in a hurry; if careless and vague answers are given to them when they cannot find the article they want, it annoys them and sometimes drives them to another store. Recently while in New York a lady noticed an advertisement of a sale of summer dresses in one of the well-known department stores. She inquired of a salesman where she might find them. Without hesitation he sent her to the third floor. On arriving there she was told she was in the wrong department and was directed to go to the second floor. There, after several more questions, she at last found what she wanted. The annoyance she naturally felt put her in an antagonistic frame of mind and nothing that was shown her pleased her critical fancy. If the salespersons do not take pains to direct customers correctly, this carelessness suggests that they may be equally inaccurate in their statements concerning the goods. When customers find that they have been directed to the wrong department not infrequently they leave without purchasing. If nobody in the store has either the time or the courtesy to direct a customer to the department she is seeking, the impression received is that the store does not desire her patronage.

**How to Direct Customers.**—Accuracy, courtesy, and intelligibility are the three essential factors in directing customers. Directions should not be given unless they are accurate. If an employee does not know where the goods asked for are located, it is far better to admit it than to guess. When the required information is given in a gracious manner, and as if it is a pleasure to do so, an impression of friendliness is at once created. Finally, in giving directions, the salesperson should look directly at the customer and speak clearly and distinctly. Care should be taken that the instructions

are understood and any terms which might not be understood by people not familiar with the store should be explained. Such terms as, "the annex," "the new building," "the balcony," may be known to salespersons and old customers but they are puzzling to new visitors.

To make it easy for customers to find their way about the store a rather exhaustive list of merchandise carried should be placed in alphabetical order and posted near the entrance of the elevator on each floor and in each car. Elevator attendants and floor managers should be able to tell without the least hesitation the location of any article on sale. The direction of customers is one of the important duties of elevator attendants and floor managers, and they should not be allowed to take up their duties until a thorough examination proves that they know the location of all items of merchandise. While in stores of ordinary size salespersons should direct customers, in large department stores covering several floors, each of large area, this task cannot be expected of them. If the salespersons in a large store take the pains to learn the location of the merchandise so much the better, but the customary practice for the salesperson is to direct in a courteous manner all inquiries for certain articles to the floor manager or to one of the elevator attendants.

The following plan suggested by a competent salesperson is good:

1. Salespersons should learn their own departments thoroughly.
2. They should learn the lines of merchandise carried on each floor of the store.
3. They should learn the details of the departments nearest them and of those whose merchandise is closely related to theirs.

4. They should gradually master the important details of all departments. To be an expert in directing customers requires considerable patience and hard work. Its importance demands that each salesperson should be an expert. After the task has been accomplished, it will assist in making a salesperson more efficient in selling and a more valuable asset to the store. In addition to knowing the store, salespersons should inform themselves as to the best way to reach the city's most important buildings, places of amusement, railroad stations, parks, and all places of special interest.

**Tactfulness with Careless Customers.**—Many customers are careless in handling goods roughly or touching them with soiled gloves. Marks and stains are left and are not easily removed. Frequently nothing can be done. A tactful salesperson who foresees the danger may be able to prevent it by politely requiring a customer to remove her gloves, or to exercise care in the handling of the goods. Creases and marks may sometimes be easily removed by dampening and pressing. A soft eraser used on a hard surface may eradicate a mark. French chalk, gasoline and ether in more serious cases, may be used to good effect. The use of these and other cleaning materials should be understood by salespersons handling certain lines of merchandise.

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### Questions

1. How should a customer be approached?
2. Why is it desirable to address a customer by name?
3. What introductory remarks should be avoided? Why?
4. Describe the best way of dismissing a customer.
5. How may suggestion be used in dismissing a customer?

6. Explain why care should be exercised in the use of "guarantee."

7. Why should a salesperson respect a customer's opinions?

8. Why is it poor salesmanship to discuss customers with friends?

9. Why is it poor salesmanship to take offense if a customer does not buy?

10. Why is the looker an important factor in selling?

11. State the proper attitude of a salesperson to a customer shabbily dressed.

12. What are the three essential factors in directing customers?

13. Mention several reasons why customers may not trade at a store.

### Collateral Reading

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## CHAPTER XV

### MENTAL STAGES OF A SALE

**The Different Stages of a Sale.**—The different stages of a sale in retail selling are:

1. Attention
2. Interest
3. Desire to possess
4. Closing the sale

The competent salesperson knows that each of the stages requires careful treatment in its own way.

**Attracting Attention.**—The work of attracting a customer's attention may be divided into two parts:

1. The factors that help to bring customers into stores
2. The part taken by the salesperson

Advertising in its many forms takes the leading part in getting customers into the store. A store spends thousands of dollars a year merely for this. Yet the presence of a customer may also be the result not of advertising but of a kindly word spoken by a friend. That comes about only through the work of the salespersons.

The expression occasionally heard, "It is a nice store to do business in," is more than an empty compliment and brings many customers into stores. The salesperson is responsible for the compliment and it should be the aim of every merchant so to train his staff that people of his community have that impression of his store. As previously emphasized a



friendly feeling towards a store plays an important rôle in successful retailing. Friends of a store tell their friends, and frequently the first visit of one person results in a dozen or more permanent customers.

**Display of Goods.**—Window display is a valuable magnet which attracts attention and draws people into a store. The materials used for decoration should be the best obtainable. The display should not be too startling, however, or people will forget to enter the store. There is equal opportunity and even greater need for display inside the store. In this display fixtures play an important part.

A Boston merchant noticed a woman leaving the silk department without buying, but carrying a sample he knew his stock could match. A little later he saw another customer fail to match one of the season's favorite colors in which the store was well stocked. He stopped this customer and politely asked her why she had failed to find the bolt to match. "Well, if you've got it, it is no fault of mine or of the girl that we couldn't find it," she replied. "We both looked high and low. Finally, I became provoked, particularly as I know where I can get it." The merchant went over to the silk counter. One of the desired bolts he found in a stock box; the other had fallen behind a shelf. The fixtures failed to show the stock.

Counters and shelves should not be used for a display of silks and piece-goods. Tent-shaped racks are more serviceable. Such racks have edge boards, a flat top-piece about twelve inches wide, with strips of heavy moulding running from apex to bottom at intervals of the width of a bolt of goods. The bolts are racked between the mouldings in color

ranges. At a glance the customer is shown the complete gradation of shades offered in the color that is sought. Customers themselves may match samples or select patterns by inspecting the racked bolts. This style of fixtures keeps all the stock constantly before customers.

As fixtures play an important part in attracting attention, they should be designed to display goods to the best advantage and make them easily accessible. Merchandise should be arranged to make the best possible appearance and impression. The manager of a large New York store states that fully 40 per cent of their sales are due to the arrangement of goods. The fixtures should be placed so as to display the goods to the best advantage. Convenience must also be considered as a means of saving time and energy of both salespersons and customers. Accessibility for the customer's inspection adds to selling possibilities.

**The Interior of the Store.**—The store should be spacious and should not be overcrowded with goods. The ceiling should be of sufficient height to give a roomy effect. The store should be well lighted and possess a general cheerful appearance. Once I heard a customer say, "Let us go to Mr. Smith's. There is not sufficient light in Mr. Brown's to see clearly what you are buying." Customers do not like a flickering or glaring light which is straining to the eye. They not only wish to shop where they are sure of the best service, but in a bright and cheerful place with an abundant supply of light where the quality of goods may be seen to best advantage. There should, of course, be absolute cleanliness in all departments. A merchandise display should look fresh, new, clean, and attractive. Nothing should appear shopworn, mussed, soiled, or of a low grade.

**Store Details that Attract Customers.**—The store should be properly ventilated and in the summer-time electric fans should be in use. A customer sensitive to impure air would leave a poorly ventilated store as soon as possible, and might be likely to advertise the fact to friends. A roomy entrance without steps has an attraction for some customers. A merchant in a large town had a good-sized step at the entrance of his store. He did not pay any attention to it as it did not occur to him that it kept customers away. Finally a close friend of his said, "Why do you not manage in some way or other to get rid of that step? It keeps customers away from your store." She told him that two of her friends had tripped and nearly had bad falls because of the step, and that was the chief reason for their going to another store. As he thought over the matter, he became convinced that the step did keep customers away. He had the entrance remodeled and by means of a grade not only did away with the objectionable step but made the entrance more attractive.

**Service Features that Attract Trade.**—Service features play an important rôle in getting customers into stores. This applies to small stores as well as to large department establishments. A merchant in a town of two thousand fitted out a cosy restroom where the wives of farmers might leave their wraps and rest. At the end of six months he declared it was the best investment that he had ever made. A large department store fitted out a room where customers could dry their skirts on rainy days. The feature was extensively advertised in wet weather. The proprietor said it was the means of bringing many customers to the store. Every service feature brings reward in the form of old and new customers. Each

facility or convenience should be carefully studied from this point of view.

Women enjoy looking. The store that makes looking easiest and has the most to display naturally attracts the woman who likes to compare values before buying. Lookers, as already noted, may become permanent customers. A prominent merchant once advertised a "courtesy day" in furniture. On that day, people were asked to come and look at the furniture that he had to sell, but not a piece was to be sold. Hundreds came to inspect the display. Many bought other articles while many saw just what they wanted and returned later to purchase. Not more than half the crowd came to buy the things they eventually bought. They came "just to look" at the furniture. The store's sales during the following week exceeded all expectations.

**How to Greet Customers.**—The mental attitude and the manners of the salesperson toward the approaching customer are of the greatest importance in arousing interest. The greeting is a matter of words and attitude. Some salespersons' bearing suggests resentment or at least annoyance at the approach of a possible customer. This is at once felt and resented by the customer. The greeting instead of being negative, neutral, or uninterested should be cordial. This does not mean that a salesperson should be servile or adopt a cringing attitude. The attitude and the whole personality should breathe a spirit of willingness to be of use and service to the customer.

It is no trouble to manifest the right sympathetic attitude towards a person we like, for in this case the action is unconscious; we act naturally and spontaneously. Every salesperson should train himself to give the same sympathetic

greeting to customers displayed in meeting friends. This attitude is revealed by outward signs. A quick step forward, a slight nod or bow, a smile and a word of greeting as, "Good morning" or "Good afternoon" if possible calling the customer by name, is the proper method. Calling a customer by name is a simple means of making a person feel at home and welcome.

**Form of Address.**—If the name is not known never use "Lady," "Ma'am" or "Mister" but always "Madam" and "Sir." Some object to the use of the term "Madam" in addressing a customer, claiming that it has a pretentious sound, and that it is superfluous. The term, nevertheless, adds dignity and is accepted as the correct word to be used. No person of any education or breeding fails to use the word "Madam" when addressing a woman whose name is unknown, and it befits the salesperson to adopt the same form of address.

The exact term of greeting, following "Good morning" or "Good afternoon"—as the case may be—varies in different stores. Where the management prescribes a certain form approved of and tested by themselves it should always be used. If the matter is left with the salesperson, "May I serve you, Madam?" or "What may I show you, Madam?" and "May I wait on you, Madam?" are favorite and accepted forms. "What for you?" "What did you want?" "Waited on?" and "Can I tempt you with anything today?" are terms that should never be used.

**Selecting the Goods the Customer Needs.**—To be of service to customers it is necessary to learn as soon as possible the general line of their tastes, wishes, and desires. A quick scrutiny of the customer's appearance and one or two ques-

tions should enable the salesperson properly to advise her as to the kind, quality, or style of goods best adapted to her requirements. Then if the salesman knows his line he can quickly decide what the customer needs. [The sooner customers have their attention directed to the particular kind of goods they require the less are the chances of their becoming confused, and dividing their attention between a number of articles.]

Care should be exercised in the number of articles placed before a customer. If too many are shown, the mental confusion which results makes it impossible for the shopper to come to a decision. A saleswoman once had this forcibly brought home to her in her early career. A customer came in and asked to see some waists. She became very enthusiastic over the two or three first shown her and as more were brought out her enthusiasm increased. Finally she said, "Stop. You must give me time to think. Presently I shall be unable to tell what I want or whether I want one at all." In the end she left the store without buying because she decided to bring one of her friends with her to help her to choose what she wanted. This incident brought home to the saleswoman the mistake that is frequently made in showing too many articles.

In closely observing the customer while the goods are being inspected many little signs can be noted which will lead the salesperson to set aside certain articles as undesirable, and to turn the customer's attention to other styles or grades of goods. The aim should be to cause customers to concentrate their attention upon one article or one line of goods so as to make the final decision easy.

**The Price the Customer Wants to Pay.**—Tact should be exercised in ascertaining the price that the customer wishes

to pay, and if a shoe, glove, or garment, the size of the article. It is a bad habit and insulting to some customers to have a salesperson ask "How much do you wish to pay?" or "Do you prefer something at about fifty cents?" Frequently they are looking for certain goods to satisfy needs, and the price has not entered their minds. It is always advisable to show goods that are too high in price rather than those which are too low. The salesperson through careful study of the customer should be able to judge approximately what price will be satisfactory. (A good practice to follow if in doubt is to show first goods of medium price. By closely watching the customer's expression a salesperson should be able to judge whether or not a more or less expensive article is desired.

**Customers Who Take Large Sizes.**—It should be remembered that size is a sensitive point with many women. It is not advisable to ask for this information. Through careful observation experienced salespersons have little trouble in gauging size. Where doubt arises, the size should not be asked, but the customer's measure should be taken. To a woman with a large hand or foot this will not cause the annoyance of having the attention of others drawn to the size she wears.

**Arousing the Desire to Possess.**—Having awakened an interest in the goods the next step is to intensify this interest until it leads to the desire to possess. There is no stage of a sale that requires greater care than this. Interest having been aroused, it must be sustained and strengthened. If the salesperson fails to do this his efforts are wasted. To increase interest the salesperson should be positive and enthusiastic when describing the goods. The general attitude of many sales-

persons is negative or passive. The article asked for is placed apathetically on the counter, and little or no attempt is made to arouse the desire to possess it. Salespersons should closely observe customers to see signs of interest. Every customer in facial expression or in action shows whether or not the thing before her is what she wants—as by the brightening of the eyes, the relaxation of lines of anxiety or doubt in the face, the gestures of the hand in drawing goods for closer inspection or casting them away, and in asking questions about goods.

Salespersons should know by these signs whether or not there is possibility of converting interest into a desire to possess. To intensify the interest, the strongest selling points should be emphasized, and frequently it is advisable to repeat those previously made.

**The Closing of the Sale.**—The desire to possess should end in a sale. The closing of the sale is another critical stage. If the salesperson has not been careful in building up to this point a strong support for his goods, he may lose the sale. The customer may have given close attention, become interested, and really desire the article and still not resolve to buy it. At this critical point many salespersons fail for the reason that they talk about the price instead of mentioning the strong qualities of their goods. It must not be forgotten that price is merely an incident and should never be made the chief feature of a sale.

The psychological moment for closing is when the customer shows a desire to purchase. In the majority of cases this is revealed by the glance. In closing the sale care should be taken not to use negative suggestions. The term "Do you want this?" should never be used. A better way is to put it in the form of a preference as "Do you prefer this color or



that, or this article or that?" Never use the expressions, "You don't want to buy this, do you?" or "Will you buy this?" The salesperson should act as if reasonably sure that the sale can be made. The tone of voice, words, manner of expression, and actions should all show that the salesperson is confident of making a sale.

**The Psychological Moment of Closing.**—In feeling out a customer to find out whether or not the time is ripe to close, the salesperson should ask questions which may lead directly and without hesitation to a sale. "Which style or finish do you prefer?" "How much do you think you can use?" "How soon would you want it?" are a few of the questions that tell the stage of the customer's mind and oftentimes lead to sales. "Will you have it delivered?" has closed many a sale. With some customers, at the right psychological moment, the inquiry: "What is the name and address?" will close a sale. The closing will vary with different customers. Customers are often talked out of buying because the salesperson does not recognize the psychological moment when the decision to possess had been reached. Selling points may be presented in an interesting and convincing manner, and yet sales may be lost because customers cannot make up their minds. Every stage in a sale is based upon knowledge, and the knowledge may be acquired through careful study. Such being the case there is little excuse for any salesperson not being able to carry a customer efficiently through the different stages to the final goal, sale.

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### Questions

1. What are the different stages of a sale?
2. What brings customers into stores?

3. What is the value of window display?
4. How do fixtures aid selling?
5. Why should attention be paid to service features?
6. What is the proper attitude in approaching a customer?  
How may this be acquired?
7. What should follow the usual greeting of "Good morning" or "Good afternoon"?
8. Why should care be exercised in the number of articles shown?
9. Why should diplomacy be used in ascertaining the size of an article?
10. What should guide a salesperson in determining the price range to show?
11. How may a salesperson secure the concentrated attention of customers?
12. Why should the attitude of salespersons be always positive and not negative?
13. When is the psychological moment to close?

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## CHAPTER XVI

### SELLING POINTS

**The Analysis of Goods.**—The special features of goods are called selling points. Everything sold has its selling points. An intricate article will have a large number, while a simply constructed article may have only a few. Careful study and analysis will reveal many interesting things that may be said about almost any article offered for sale. In such study an analytical quality of mind is essential not only for the purpose of choosing the points of the most importance, while discarding trivial matters and details which are of little consequence, but also for the purpose of associating with each point the facts that are necessary to make the strongest appeal. Many salespersons occupy the time of their customers in giving non-essential details which are of little or no interest, instead of drawing attention to those special features which are of interest and carry the conviction of value or superiority.

**Suiting the Argument to the Customer.**—The selling points that may be brought to a customer's attention will vary with different persons. How interest may best be aroused will depend in a large measure upon the good judgment shown in drawing the customer's attention to those features which appeal most to his or her type of mind. To make an effective appeal the salesperson must have a definite idea of the proper sequence of the facts he is going to present. Selling points cannot be presented effectively and forcibly

except as they are brought into proper relation with each other. They should work together, the one strengthening the other and all combining to build up the argument in favor of the purchase. This does not mean that the most important selling points should not be emphasized, but the argument should lead naturally from one point to another, covering each one completely.

The selection of the selling points suitable for an individual and their proper arrangement demand considerable skill. If a clear impression is to be left in the customer's mind there must be no confusion and no retracing of steps. Each point must follow logically from the one preceding so that a single line of reasoning runs throughout the statement. Customers should never feel that the salesman is stating bald facts which are intended to persuade them to buy, but rather that the arguments in favor of the purchase follow a natural path of reasoning.

**Delivery of Selling Talk.**—The talk as a whole should be delivered with earnestness and enthusiasm and the points should be expressed in words that are easily understood. The language that would appeal to the ear of a college professor would not perhaps be appropriate for a laboring man. Customers seldom take the trouble to think out the advantages or benefits which the arguments are intended to bring to their notice. The full meaning of the sales talk must be clearly understood. Concreteness is required, as general statements make little impression upon the average mind, while the arguments should be presented in a tone that carries conviction of the speaker's earnestness. If salespersons follow this advice they will create a keener interest in their goods.

The selling points should be varied to suit the customer's prejudices and dislikes, a knowledge of which can be obtained only by judgment and observation. No two sales are made in exactly the same way. Each demands a distinct line of action. There must be with each customer a definite and well worked-out line of attack. Decision as to this attack must be made quickly, by reading the character of the customer through outward signs, expression and features. Knowing how people act and what will cause action decides the selling points to use, their order, and their manner of presentation. Every step taken should be based upon knowledge and nothing left to guess or chance.

**The Appeal to the Motive of Profit.**—There is a motive for all purchases, and the possible motives in buying a particular article should be carefully studied. The aim of the sales talk should be to present the advantages or attractiveness of the goods in such a way as to arouse in the mind of the customer as many motives as possible for making the purchase. If it is discovered that a particular motive is stronger than others, special stress should be laid upon that motive. The most important motives are profit, pleasure, comfort, convenience, vanity, and style.

The strongest motive in many cases is that of profit and it is generally safe to show the customer that the purchase of an article will result in this kind of benefit. Profit may arise from a saving of time, effort, or money, or by obtaining results though using less in quantity. The latter selling point for instance may be used effectively in the sale of soap and perfumes. Profit may arise from the better service given by the goods. Such service may be inferred from the qualities of the materials used in production, from the workmanship,

and from the rigid inspection to which the goods are subjected during their manufacture. To many types of mind this is the most forcible and strongest appeal that can be made.

Greater convenience through use is the strong selling point of many articles of every-day use in the home. In the sale of such utilities a little imagination is required to connect the selling points with the customer's every-day life, and when this is effectively done interest is aroused and as a rule a sale is quickly made.

**The Motives of Pleasure and of Comfort.**—The customer who is buying something for pleasure rather than use is inclined to accept that which pleases and to reject that which displeases. With many articles the strongest appeal is to the motives of pleasure and comfort. This is particularly true in regard to shoes, hats, underwear, and clothes. The appeal of comfort is stronger with some people than with others and salespersons should study their customers with a view to discovering where this is the case.

The most forceful appeal to the customer whose dress reveals vanity and whose manner is haughty is that the goods are becoming to the user. This can be applied especially in the sale of hats, waists, and dresses. It is easy to distinguish the customers whose appearance is a matter in which they are deeply interested and with such persons style should be strongly emphasized. Some people place more importance upon style than others, but style as to shape, cut, make, color, and pattern is always an important consideration in selling to persons who are fashionably dressed. When such a customer buys a pair of shoes, her chief interest is whether or not the shoes are of the latest shape and color. On the other hand,

the strongest appeal to the lady who is quietly dressed may be service or wearing qualities. An observing eye and the ability to read human nature should be part of the mental equipment of all whose occupation it is to sell articles of dress.

**What the Goods on Sale Will Do.**—An effective way of rousing interest is to show what the goods will do. Most merchandise has one or more special points that can be demonstrated in this way. An appeal to the eye is usually more effective than an appeal to the ear. Thus one kind of merchandise may be shown in combination with something else with which it may be appropriately used. The more closely this combination approximates the customer's intended use of the material, the better. Lace, for instance, may be shown with goods which it is intended to decorate. Ribbon may be demonstrated in a number of ways. A breakfast set tastefully arranged and ready for use makes a strong appeal. If goods are studied carefully, it will be found that there is hardly an article that cannot be demonstrated to some extent.

**Points in Demonstrating Goods.**—In demonstrating an article it should be handled carefully, thus suggesting that it is of value. To toss an article carelessly upon the counter gives the impression that it is not worth much. It should be remembered that the way in which salespersons handle goods suggests quality or inferiority. A favorable first impression of the goods is an extremely important matter. Therefore the goods demonstrated should not be shopworn, soiled, or crumpled, or the demonstration may create an unfavorable impression. Attention should be given, besides, to the adequacy and character of the light in which the goods are displayed.



**Importance of Telephone Sales.**—In many stores selling by telephone is a service which has been studied and standardized to the extent that it has become an important factor in creating business. Telephone sales require different handling from sales over the counter. Voice, utterance, and language are all-important in telephone selling. Great care should be taken to prevent the voice from giving the customer the impression that the salesperson is impatient. A polite, patient tone, and courteous phrases—with, when necessary, just the right shade of decision—are requisites of good telephone service. The salesperson should learn the art of projecting a pleasing impression over the wire. This is no easy task and requires considerable training.

**How to Handle a Call.**—When the bell rings the salesperson should not jerk the receiver from the hook, and shout "Hello" or some other inane expression. The answer should be the name of the store, followed by the department, for instance, "Killian's Grocery Department." It is important for the salesperson to talk business as soon as the receiver is taken down. Attention should be concentrated upon the telephone, and a conversation should not be carried on with someone else nearby. If the customer should reply, "Wrong department," the salesperson should be ready with a courteous answer that shows no trace of impatience or displeasure. He should say, "Hold the wire and I will have you transferred." Many salespersons themselves, snap out "Wrong number" or "Wrong department" and replace the receiver. This is a very discourteous way to treat a customer. When the salesperson hangs up a receiver with a customer still on the line, the operator will very likely think the conversation ended and disconnect. The customer is free to do one of

three things, go through the whole routine of recalling, call another store where she thinks she would receive better service, or give up the effort entirely. Frequently another store is called and if courteous treatment is received there, a good customer may be lost to the first store.

**Securing Name and Address of Caller.**—The name, initials, and the address of the customer should be secured early in the conversation. Sales cannot be made, nor goods delivered, without these details. There is always the likelihood that transmission trouble may interrupt a telephone conversation. Sometimes if the name and address are not secured at the beginning of the conversation, a customer may give an order and the salesperson may forget to ask the name and address. Then what good is the order? The customer, believing that everything is satisfactory, will be displeased at not receiving her order, and will resent the failure of the store to deliver the goods at the expected time. It often happens in household arrangements that plans are made for using the goods at a specified time, and their non-appearance causes much inconvenience. It should be a strict rule that with telephone customers the initials, name, and address be secured before the order is taken.

A telephone customer calls and says, "Let me talk with Miss Jones, please." The person answering should say, "I will look for her," "I will send for her," "I will see if she is free," or something of a similar nature. There should be no delay in carrying out the promise. Sometimes after a salesperson makes a promise of this nature, she is interrupted and forgets for the time being to seek the party asked for. Annoyance and sometimes disgust will cause the customer to wait no longer, and to hang up the receiver in the proper mood

to transfer her trading to another store. If Miss Jones is out, the salesperson should come back and state the fact, adding "Can I do anything for you?" Frequently the customer telephones for information which cannot be given at once. In this case the customer's name and telephone number should be secured with a promise to furnish the desired information as soon as possible. The promise should always be kept.

**Example of Good Telephone Service.**—The following is a conversation heard in a store that had paid special attention to selling by telephone.

"This is Smith and Jones' grocery department," a clerk answered without other preliminary speech.

"Is Mr. Brown there?" inquired the customer.

"Just a moment, please, I will call him." After an interval of probably eight or nine seconds a pleasant voice was heard on the wire saying:

"This is Mr. Brown. Who is this please?"

"Mrs. Jackson, I wish you to send me a number of things on the afternoon delivery without fail. Can you promise me, Mr. Brown?"

"Yes, indeed, Mrs. Jackson, I will mark the order 'Special' and attend to it myself."

A list of half a dozen articles followed. At the end, Mr. Brown repeated the order to avoid errors. With a pleasant, "Thank you" and a prompt "You are welcome" the conversation was concluded.

**The Delivery Service.**—Every salesperson selling by telephone should know thoroughly the details of the store's delivery service. No salesperson should admit, "I really

can't say if we can deliver the goods this afternoon or not." On the other hand, to make the promise of a delivery for the day, only to find later that it is impossible, and that the goods must be delivered on the morrow, is equally wrong.

Many retailers have found it profitable to establish a special delivery to take care of "rush" telephone orders. A Texas druggist built up a large business in prescriptions and specialties by providing for the immediate delivery of emergency orders by motorcycles. An eastern grocery firm has adopted the same idea, and uses a similar system for "rush" telephone orders. Many stores deliver even trifling purchases in this way when the customer makes her need apparent.

Not every salesperson makes a good telephone clerk. Such an employee should be normal physically, and cheerful mentally, and be absolutely free from physical defects such as deafness, imperfect enunciation, and throat affections. Nobody handicapped in any of these ways should be allowed to sell goods by telephone.

**Speak Into the Phone.**—There is a right way of handling telephone equipment and there are many wrong ways. Care should be used in removing the receiver from the hook, and in replacing it, since the snapping of the hook causes an unpleasant vibration and noise, which are irritating to the ear of the listener. To make her voice clear and distinct the salesperson should speak directly into the phone and should hold the mouth not less than half an inch and not more than one inch from the mouthpiece. The voice should be somewhat louder than in an ordinary conversation at close range. If the mouthpiece is more than one inch from the mouth, it will

be difficult to transmit the consonant sounds distinctly. The speaker should speak more slowly than in ordinary conversation and should make an effort to enunciate very clearly, especially lip and nasal sounds.

The position of the telephone when in use is a detail that is often overlooked. The instrument should rest flat on the counter, showcase, or shelf. Employees should be warned against picking it up and jiggling it. Such treatment accomplishes nothing, while it is liable to disarrange the delicate mechanism. The telephone hook should never be jangled rapidly when it is necessary to attract the attention of the operator. The hook should be worked slowly up and down. This is the only sensible way of attracting attention.

**The Practice of Self Analysis.**—Every salesperson should make a practice of analyzing the reason for his or her lost sales and of mentally asking why the customer refused to buy. Was it the fault of the salesperson? Was there any other method which might have led to the sale? These and similar questions require careful consideration every time a shopper leaves a counter without making a purchase. In this way and in a short time weaknesses are discovered and by remedying these selling efficiency is increased. To be able to analyze one's weaknesses requires a certain degree of imagination. If a sale is successful, how was it made? Was the case any different from an ordinary sale? Was anything new introduced which would be of service in handling future customers? All these questions should be considered and answers sought. Half an hour spent each day in analyzing failures, and in finding the reasons therefore, would be time profitably spent.

### Questions

1. Why is the power of analysis important in selling?
2. Is it advisable to use the same selling points for all customers?  
Give reasons for your answer.
3. Why is sequence important in arranging selling points?
4. How may selling points be brought in proper relation to each other?
5. What care in the use of language should be observed in presenting selling points?
6. Why does concreteness make arguments stronger?
7. How many selling points should be used in making a sale?
8. What should decide the selection of selling points?
9. What motives should be appealed to in making a sale?
10. Name and explain the qualities of wants.
11. When is style the strongest appeal?
12. What is the place of demonstration in selling?
13. Why should care be exercised in demonstrating articles?
14. Why is it important to analyze lost sales?
15. What are the chief requisites for efficient selling by telephone?

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## CHAPTER XVII

### OBJECTIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

**Kinds of Objections.**—If a careful study of the sales that have been lost were made, the chief reason would be found to be, says a well-known merchant, that the salesperson did not know how to meet the customer's objections. It is natural for customers to raise objections and a sale is seldom made unless it is merely the filling of an order, in which several objections are not advanced. Generally there are two kinds of objections:

1. Excuses for not buying
2. Sincere and honest objections

Many customers criticize the goods just because they like to find fault. They may not be serious in what they say, and oftentimes their objections are purely imaginary. Yet their criticism must not be treated in a light manner, still less should the point be argued as is sometimes done by the novice. Rebutting an objection and arguing with a customer are not salesmanship, and the practice should not be allowed in any store. It antagonizes the customer. A customer who is mentally irritated is not to be convinced that the goods have any merit and a sale in such a case is usually impossible.

When a customer offers an honest objection to the goods shown him, there is some cause for that objection. It is the task of the salesperson to learn the reason and to answer the objection in the most skilful manner. To ignore it or to try to dodge it is a confession of weakness, and is usually so in-



terpreted by the customer. When honest objections are made there is only one thing to do, namely, to face them squarely.

**Reasons for Objections.**—The chief objections are those relating to quality and price. They may be most effectively met by anticipating them and preventing their being made. If the salesperson knows the value of the goods he should have no trouble in forestalling any objection that might arise in the customer's mind as to the price asked for them.

Objections to price are of two kinds. Those which imply that the prices asked may be proper but are higher than the customer can afford to pay, and those which imply that the customer thinks the article dear at the price asked. In meeting an objection of the first class it is necessary to convince the customer that a higher priced article, especially if it is something to be worn, will prove in the long run more economical than the cheaper article; or if it is an article in which style is an important element, that the additional satisfaction afforded by its appearance will more than compensate for the high price. If in spite of these answers customers cannot obviously afford to pay the higher price, or if the cheaper article suits their needs better, then the obvious policy is to show and sell a low-priced article rather than lose the sale.

**Objections as to Price.**—Many sales are lost because the salesperson does not realize that the customer cannot afford to pay the price of an expensive article. A laborer took his small son into a store to buy his first suit of clothes. The salesman showed a suit that cost several dollars more than the customer could afford to pay. The customer said that the price was too high and asked for a cheaper suit. The sales-

man thought he meant that the price was more than the value of the suit. Arguments were put forth proving this was not so. The customer repeated that the price was too high, and said that he wished to see something cheaper. The salesman even then did not see the reason for the objection and continued his arguments to show value. Eventually the customer left the store and the salesman wondered why he did not make the sale. Had he seen the real cause of the objection, he would have had sense enough to show and sell a cheaper suit.

**Objections to High-priced Goods.**—When a customer says that an article is dear and implies that it is not worth the price asked, properly selected selling points presented with tact are the best response. Many customers object to the price because their ideas are commonplace. Stores carry lines of goods at different prices to meet different tastes and demands. Though customers should be made to feel that the store is willing to sell a cheaper grade of goods if these are preferred yet the endeavor should always first be made to sell the higher priced goods. The better service and satisfaction resulting from the use of high-priced goods of the best quality are selling points which should be emphasized. The beauty, or style, or wearing qualities of one article may more than repay the difference in price between that and another. Price is usually only a temporary consideration and is soon forgotten. The better service received from the higher priced article is more likely to bring a customer back to the store than is a cheap article which proved unsatisfactory in wear or service. Remember it is not the price but the satisfaction that is received from using the goods that makes a customer permanent.

The objection is sometimes made that a competitor's goods

are cheaper or better at the price. As before noted, to discuss this matter is dangerous. As little as possible should be said about a competing article. It is poor salesmanship to compare one's own goods with those of a competitor. The comparison should always be left with the customer. By placing the emphasis upon the selling points that bring out the superiority of the dearer goods, the cheaper articles are forgotten. Nevertheless if a competitor's goods are cheaper, admit the fact, but show the good points in your own. A salesperson should never dwell upon a competitor's goods but bring back attention to his own.

**Objections Due to Taste.**—Many objections to the purchase of goods are due to differences in taste. Frequently a customer says she does not like this color or that style. It is dangerous to try and sell her one color or style when she prefers another as the chances are that she will be dissatisfied with the change. Some salespersons are able to read a customer, so as to know clearly whether another color or style than that preferred will be becoming and suited to her tastes. No article should be sold that is not becoming, and every discouragement should be given to the purchase of such an article. Many millinery saleswomen are so anxious to make sales that they sell hats which they know are not becoming, and will not be liked by the customer. "Never sell a hat, garment, or shoe that is not becoming," is one of the rules of a big department store.

To sum up the method of meeting objections, the requirements are: a thorough knowledge of the goods, the ability to read human nature, the power to choose convincing arguments and present them in an interesting manner, and the ability to use proper suggestions and tact. Possessed of these

qualities, no difficulty should be experienced in making a sale when the only obstacles are the objections which are usually raised.

**Power of Suggestion.**—The mind is dominated by ideas, and the idea which is uppermost in the mind tends to express itself in action. When the idea originates within one's own mind it is called an impulse; when the thought is prompted from the outside it is a suggestion. The effect of suggestion is illustrated by the tendency of most people to imitate a sneeze or cough. If one member of a group sneezes others are likely to do the same, although there is no compelling necessity for the act. The action is involuntary and is performed without realization.

All acts resulting from suggestions are similar to the involuntary act exemplified by sneezing. If, for instance, one person sees another buying a certain article, which the first person needs or fancies, the suggestion may cause the first person to imitate the action by buying also. In carrying out a suggestion, the method is the same as in imitating others. We do not feel that we have been forced to act, but rather that we are doing just what we wish to do, and that it is the only natural and rational thing to do under the circumstances. We think we are doing voluntarily that which is done because its doing has been suggested to us.

**Law of Suggestion.**—Suggestion has been defined as a peculiar mental action that causes people to act without knowing why they act. A prominent psychologist says that by suggestion is meant nothing more than the intrusion of an idea into the mind with such skill and power that the new idea dominates, and for the moment disarms or excludes, any

thought which might prevent its realization. The law of suggestion may be stated as an idea of an action which results in that action unless hindered by an impeding idea or physical impediment. This means that the tendency is for every thought to be followed by action, unless prevented by competing ideas.

Action by suggestion as applied to salesmanship demands that no mention should be made of competitor's goods, and that the attention of customers should be focused on the merits of the articles they are examining. Thoughts about other goods should not be allowed to enter the mind of the customer. To influence customers and to make them have the same belief in goods as the salesperson, is no easy task. The two methods available for performing this task are those of argument and suggestion. The first is based upon reasoning and requires deliberation upon the part of the customer to decide if the purchase is to be made. In selling to professional buyers, this is usually the only method that can be used. In a larger proportion of ordinary cases the second method, that of suggestion, may be used. A sale made by the suggestion method is the result not of deliberation on the part of the customer, but rather of an impulse, prompted by some more or less definite appeal by the salesman to the customer's taste or feeling. The suggestion method is often necessary to supplement the argument method. Skilful suggestions made at the proper time will materially assist in the effectiveness of any argument.

**Practical Use of Suggestion.**—The practical application of suggestion means saying or doing something that starts customers' minds moving in the direction of the sale. Suggestion helps customers to decide in favor of goods. As the

average customer resents being driven to make a decision, suggestion is necessary. Suggestions may also be made with the idea of recalling a need to mind. They should never be used for the purpose of selling something for which a person has no particular use. Many shoe stores for instance carry hosiery and additional sales are frequently made by suggesting a purchase of hosiery. The kind of goods to suggest depends upon the customer. To a laboring man buying a shirt, it would be folly to suggest a two-dollar tie, while to a man of means and a careful dresser, it would be a waste of time to suggest a cheaper one. Sales through suggestion depend in a large measure upon the ability of the salesperson to read the character of customers and to decide the grade, style, and kind of goods that may be purchased if the suggestion is made that they are needed or desirable.

Sometimes the premature suggestion of another purchase may cause a customer to hesitate in deciding upon the article under consideration. If the salesperson is able to read his customer, he will have little difficulty in knowing just when to suggest other goods, and how to make the appeal. The proper moment to offer a suggestion is when the customer's mind is released and that is usually after a decision has been reached. This moment, many salespersons say, is exactly ten seconds after the customer has made the decision to buy the first article.

**Danger of Negative Suggestions.**—Suggestions may be positive or negative and under no circumstances should negative suggestions be made. The suggestion: "There is nothing else?" invites a customer to say "No." Another remark equally unwise is, "Is that all?" which invites the answer "Yes." The idea should be presented that something else

may be needed. If the salesperson had said, "What else?" the suggestion would have been positive. Remarks suggesting the answer "No" should not be used as they lose many sales. A friend of the writer wished to buy a black, light-weight overcoat and went to a tailoring establishment. The salesman said, "We haven't what you want in black. You wouldn't want an Oxford gray would you?" The answer came at once, "No." Then he visited another establishment. He did not tell the salesman that he wanted a coat, but simply said that he would like to look at some patterns. After the proper color and grade of goods had been found, the salesman said, "Do you want a velvet collar or a collar made of the same material as the coat?" The salesman had not been told that the customer intended to buy a coat. Note that the salesman used positive statements. Then he further remarked, "We will make you a collar of each kind and you can have it changed when you desire it." The styles were then shown and the salesman asked if the customer wanted a loose or close-fitting coat. The sale was thus made by suggestion and positive statements were used throughout. Yet the customer had decided that he would not buy that day. He had gone into the establishment merely to look around.

**Illustration of Positive Suggestions.**—A good illustration of the use of positive suggestion, which also explains why many salespersons fail, is the following:

Mary Brown mystified her employers with her success in selling. "It cannot be a case of repeat orders from a personal following," one of the proprietors remarked, "for she is a comparative stranger in the city. I think I will watch her methods." A little later he took his place close to Miss Brown's counter. He noticed that next to her was located

Miss Smith, a girl of pleasing personality, whose sales, however, averaged low. As a customer approached Miss Smith, the sales girl said, "You won't want a pair of these silk gloves?" as she displayed the articles. "No," replied the customer indifferently, and she wandered along the aisle studying the stock. Finally she halted in front of Miss Brown's counter. "Here is something new in gloves which, I believe, will interest you," remarked Miss Brown, immediately engaging the attention of the visitor. "They are chamois and practical," and she launched into a description of their advantages. She soon had a glove on the customer's hand. Throughout, Miss Brown held to the positive attitude. All her suggestions were in favor of the merchandise and she assumed that the customer wished to buy. Not a negative note was sounded. In a few moments a sale was made. The proprietor learned why Miss Brown was so successful. She assumed a positive attitude always, realizing that however hard to please customers may be they are all influenced by the power of a positive suggestion.

**Illustration of Negative Suggestions.**—J. S. Knox in "Salesmanship and Business Efficiency" gives a good illustration of a negative suggestion that lost a sale. A farmer came to town to buy a self-binder. He looked at a machine which pleased him and was about to place an order. The salesman, thinking that he would further convince him said, "I tell you, this binder has given us very little trouble." The farmer was looking for a binder that would not give any trouble, not even a little. He said, "Well, I guess I will look around first before I buy." He went across the street to another implement store, examined their binders and at the conclusion of a conversation the salesman re-



marked, "This binder has given us excellent satisfaction." The machine was purchased. If the first salesman had used the same form of statement, the farmer would probably have bought his machine.

Suggestive selling is an important part of a salesperson's work. If a salesperson's whole attention is not concentrated upon a customer his attitude suggests a lack of interest and indifference on the part of the store towards the customer. A friend of the writer recently remarked that she was not going to a certain place to trade any more. She was asked why. "Oh," she said, "the last time I went in, Mr. Smith did not take time to speak and his manner made me feel that he was not particular whether I traded there or not, so I am going where I shall receive a welcome." Later Mr. Smith was asked if he knew this party. He said, "Yes, but I have not seen her in the store recently. I wonder why. She was one of my best customers." The attitude of indifference suggested to the customer that Mr. Smith did not take any interest in her trade, and she wished to trade with people who did. Many customers are in this way turned away from stores. Indifference in greeting, in waiting upon customers, or in leave-taking will, through suggestion, exert an important influence upon sales.

**Effect of Suggestion on Delivery.**—In a large department store, the salespersons were instructed to ask the question at the close of a sale, "Do you wish it delivered?" The delivery service was always overtaxed. The proprietor finally decided to try the effect of suggestion in reducing the delivery burden. He instructed all the salespersons to say at the close of a sale, "Will you take it with you?" A careful account was kept of the influence of this suggestion upon the

delivery service and it was found that the expense was decreased by about one-third.

**Suggestion in Closing a Sale.**—Suggestion is of special value in closing a sale. Many a salesperson can arouse interest and convert it into desire to buy, but cannot get a customer to make the purchase. "Do you wish to take them with you, or have them delivered?" "Do you wish to pay for them, or have them sent C. O. D.?" These two questions have made many sales. In short, the average customer is moved by suggestion more than by any other force. This being the case, its importance should be clearly impressed upon every salesperson. Walter Dill Scott says: "Man has been called the reasoning animal, but he could with greater truthfulness be called the creature of suggestion. He is reasonable, but he is to a greater extent suggestible."

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### Questions

1. How should imaginary objections be handled?
2. Why is the denial of an objection not efficient salesmanship?
3. Mention several kinds of objections.
4. What are the three common objections to price? How should each be treated?
5. How should an objection on the score of the superiority of competitor's goods be met?
6. Why should a salesperson not compare his own with competitor's goods?
7. Why should care be exercised in raising objections to taste?
8. What is the place of suggestion in salesmanship?
9. What is the law of suggestion?
10. What factors increase suggestibility?
11. Give the two methods for influencing customers. Explain each.

12. What kinds of goods should be suggested?
13. Why should salespersons avoid negative suggestions?
14. Why is suggestive selling the most important part of a salesperson's work?
15. In what way may suggestion assist in closing a sale?

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## CHAPTER XVIII

### STORE ORGANIZATION

**Store Management.**—A retail store is conducted for the purpose of making a profit in the buying and the selling of goods. To accomplish this end the work of a large store is usually divided into five distinct divisions of management as follows:

1. Goods must be bought.
2. There must be a force of people to sell and deliver the goods.
3. There must be a store for the storing, display, and selling of the goods.
4. Records must be kept of goods bought and sold, as well as expenses, in order to show the financial condition of the business.
5. The public must be advised of the kind, style, and variety of goods for sale.

Of these different divisions of work the first two are usually cared for by a merchandising manager who looks after the buying and selling; the third, by a general superintendent who supervises the store and its operations; the fourth, by an accountant in charge of the records; and the last division, by an advertising manager in charge of publicity.

**General Manager.**—In all stores, there is a head or chief executive who is called usually the "general manager." He may be the owner but is more commonly the owner's author-

ized agent. He directs the policies of the business, and is responsible in general for its successful administration. His managerial service must be efficiently performed or profits will fall and losses be incurred, hence the great importance of selecting a capable man for the position of general manager. Such a man must possess executive ability, be an organizer and a leader of others. He must be a judge of human nature so that he will be successful in choosing capable department heads. Though he has wide supervision over all the interests of the business, frequently he gives his chief attention to the merchandising end of management, making a study of conditions which bear upon the trade of the various departments. He watches the public's needs and tastes and is quick to anticipate or foretell changes in fashion. The usual practice is for the general manager to hold conferences at frequent intervals with his department heads for the purpose of discussing all matters of general business interest.

**The Merchandise Manager.**—In most stores the buying and selling of goods is under the general charge of a merchandise manager who studies markets both for buying and selling. In some stores, he may be and often is an expert in these matters. It is he who decides the limits of each department's appropriation for the purchase of merchandise. In co-operation with the buyers he plans in advance all special merchandising features such as opening sales, holiday offerings, mark-downs, extensive changes in goods, displays, and special sales. He advises the buyers as to purchases, examines all their orders for purchases, and passes upon all invoices, discounts, and other bills for goods. The buyers and their sales forces are responsible to him while he is re-

sponsible to the general manager for all purchases and sales and any losses that result therefrom.

The success of a retail store depends much upon the ability of the merchandise manager. He must be an expert judge of merchandise and of markets, and a shrewd estimator as to what goods and what quantities will sell to the public to which the store caters. In a large retail organization the merchandise manager may have an assistant manager to whom he assigns some of his managerial duties.

**The Departmental Divisions.**—The merchandise manager usually has many assistants who act as buyers, assistant buyers, visiting shoppers, and members of the alteration and mail-order departments. In the average large retail store it is necessary to departmentalize, that is, to classify the selling according to the kinds of goods sold. This classification is seen to best advantage in a department store where the lines sold consist of dry-goods, groceries, boots and shoes, men's clothing, hardware, furniture, drugs, and so on. These main departments may in their turn be divided into other departments. A clothing store, for example, may be divided into several departments, as, men's suits, overcoats, children's clothing, hats, collars and neckwear, shirts, underwear, etc. Each department may be looked upon as a complete store in itself except for certain store services performed for all departments in common, such as delivering goods and keeping credit records.

**Duties of Buyer.**—The buyer is the storekeeper of his department. In a large store, his stock may amount to thousands of dollars and be larger than the stock of a good-sized retail store. He works directly under the merchandise

manager, from whom he receives instructions and to whom he is responsible for the profitable returns of his department. He works out selling plans which he presents to the merchandise manager, and if approved by him they are sent to the advertising manager. The buyer must be thoroughly acquainted with the taste of the buying public so as to gauge what kinds of lines to carry. In buying, he is generally given a free hand except for limitations as to the amount of money he can spend.

It is the duty of the buyer to call the attention of salespersons to new goods and explain their selling points. He looks after the arrangement of the stock in his department, carefully watches to avoid the accumulation of dead stock, and makes recommendations for special sales and mark-downs for the purpose of moving any goods that do not sell at the regular prices. He co-operates in the instruction of the salespersons by furnishing them with information about the merchandise they handle and acquaints them with its important selling points. In small stores the buyer may devote part of his time to selling.

**The Buyer and the Advertising Department.**—The buyer plays an important rôle in advertising. The advertising manager consults him as to what goods he wishes to advertise. The offerings may be due to surplus stock, the result of overbuying, or they may consist of goods that are hard to sell, or they may be the latest purchases of new stock. The buyer furnishes the advertising manager with a description of the qualities of the goods, and states a price at which he thinks they should sell. In some large stores the buyer's report to the advertising department is made in writing, giving the name of the goods, cost, regular selling price, price at which

they are to be advertised, and the selling points to be emphasized in the advertisement. These reports are then submitted to the merchandise manager who, in consultation with the advertising man, plans in a general way what is to receive primary and what secondary attention in the advertisement. The amount of advertising space to be allotted to each department is settled through consultation of advertising manager, buyer, and merchandise manager.

**The Buyer's Assistant.**—In a large store, each buyer has an assistant who is capable of taking his place in his absence, besides helping in the general duties of the department. Buyers of certain lines of goods make frequent trips to Europe; nearly all buyers visit the market centers of the country and in their absence the assistant is left in charge of the routine and clerical work of the department, and of the stock plans and stock records. To him may be assigned the work of following up special orders and hastening deliveries as well as of making the necessary department reports to the records department. Under the assistant are "heads of stock" who have charge of the different stocks of goods. From the heads of stock, who are usually experts of the merchandise over which they have supervision, are generally chosen the assistant buyers. Assistant buyers are selected from salespersons who have shown special knowledge of the merchandise, and also special ability in handling the minor details of the department's work.

**The Receiving-Room and Returned Goods Department.**—The receiving-room is the room where all merchandise entering the store is received and accounted for. The work is handled by:



1. A head receiver and an assistant head receiver, who have charge of the department.
2. A receiving clerk, who signs for all goods received and makes entries in the proper journals.
3. An examiner, who opens goods, inspects them, and checks them from the invoices.
4. A bill clerk who makes a record of the goods as they leave the department.
5. The handlers of merchandise.

The returned goods department is either in close touch with the receiving-room or is a part of it. This department deals with all merchandise returned by the store to wholesale dealers. The persons who take care of the work are the clerk who keeps the records and sends bills with returned goods, the packer, and the packer's helpers.

**Marking-room and Stockroom.**—In a large store the marking-room is usually a separate room where goods are marked with their cost and selling prices. In a small store it is often a part of the receiving-room, but with its own system and staff of employees. The personnel of this department are the head marker, the assistant head marker, and the clerks. Their work is to tag cost and selling prices, as fixed by buyers and merchandise manager, on all articles, before they are placed on sale or sent to the stockroom.

The stockroom is the room in which the reserve or surplus merchandise is stored after it has been examined and marked for sale. In a large department establishment goods are often stored in separate warehouses. The personnel of such a warehouse consist of the stock man and his assistants called stock boys, who have charge of all merchandise in stock, preparing it, and bringing it out for sale.

**Duties of Professional Shoppers.**—The professional shoppers are employees who visit competing stores to make a study of goods, prices, arrivals of new lines of goods, displays, and selling methods. Their duties are to gather ideas and suggestions that may be used to advantage in the store. Some large department stores employ several of these professional shoppers.

**Alteration Department.**—In a ready-to-wear clothing store selling goods that may require alterations to suit customers, there is an alteration department under the supervision of the buyer, who is responsible for its efficient operation. Good buying presupposes the buying of clothes that fit well. Poor buying increases costs of selling through the need of more alterations. If the buyer is aware that his department must stand the loss of alterations, he will exercise the greatest possible care in buying. The alteration department is usually conducted on the same system as a special order factory. By means of this system it is possible to determine the cost to the store of each alteration so that the buyer may know the amount of this expense and thus reduce it when necessary in order to keep it within reasonable figures.

**Duties of Store Superintendent.**—A store superintendent is the executive in charge of the store and its operation. In a small store he performs the duties of floor manager. Upon him rests the responsibility for the proper discipline of employees and store order. He hires, discharges, and transfers all employees. Through him promotions are made, and the educational department for the training of employees is under his direction. He is responsible for working conditions, and oversees the restaurant, hospital, recreation,

library, and clubrooms conducted by many large stores for the benefit of their employees. If the store maintains an employees' insurance system, it is usually under his direction.

The superintendent must also establish the necessary store systems. He organizes the delivery department, the inspecting and wrapping departments, and the exchange and complaint departments. The care and maintenance of the building may be part of his duties of supervision. He must see that it is kept clean and properly lighted, heated, and ventilated. Changes in the store plan are passed upon by him. He authorizes repairs, and supplies used in the store are purchased by his department.

A capable superintendent knows both his building and the location of everything within it from top to bottom. He may be called the efficiency expert within the store. He sees that the elevators are running safely. His welfare department attends to the welfare of the store employees, physically, mentally, and morally. As it is necessary for him to spend much of his time about the store he is usually in the building at the time of opening and is one of the last persons to leave in the evening.

**Duties of Floor Managers.**—Directly responsible to the superintendent are a number of assistants called floor managers whose duty it is to keep their respective parts of the store in good order and to preserve discipline among the sales force. Through them, the superintendent has indirect supervision over the work of the salespeople. The floor managers assist the salespeople in every way possible. They welcome the customers and direct them to the department sought, they see that customers are not carelessly treated and that they receive what they want. Where a salesperson fails to

make a sale, a floor manager often succeeds. The floor managers may be called the line officers of the army of employees. It is their duty to secure co-operation among salespersons for the improvement of methods of showing goods, pointing out selling points, showing how to handle different types of customers and in many other ways making the sales force more efficient.

It is part of the floor manager's duty to receive all signs and cards used for store displays, to see that these are properly placed and that the goods are displayed neatly and tidily on the counters and shelves. He looks after the lighting, heating, and general comfort of his floor. All lost and found articles as well as any change that may be left by customers are turned over to him for delivery to the general office. Many sales checks must receive the floor manager's O. K.

The floor clerk is an assistant to the floor manager. He handles such details as making exchanges, credits, and refunds.

**Floor Boys.**—Under the supervision of a floor clerk in large stores are one or more floor boys whose duty it is to be the first to arrive in the department in the morning and to dust and remove the covers from the merchandise. During the day, the boy cleans up, keeps water tanks filled, makes special deliveries of parcels outside, serves as messenger between departments, and if there is no stock boy in a section he makes deliveries of the new stock required. At the close of the day he covers up the merchandise to protect it from dust.

**The Delivery Department.**—The delivery department has charge of the delivery of goods. Merchandise which is to be sent to the customer's home is delivered by the salesperson

to the bundle desk where it is wrapped. Then it is taken to the shipping-room to be packed if necessary, and given to the delivery man covering the district in which the package is to be delivered. A large store may have a separate packing-room.

The personnel of the delivery department consists of a head examiner in charge of a number of assistant examiners, who are responsible for the condition in which merchandise is sent out; a head shipper with his assistants, who are responsible for the actual sending of goods; collectors of bundles, who take packages to the shipping-room and sort them according to delivery districts; entry clerks, who make records of shipments, and billing clerks, who make out C. O. D. bills.

**Department of Supply and Construction.**—In large stores, there is usually a department of supply and construction, the duties of which comprise the supervision and maintenance of buildings and fixtures, the making of contracts, and the buying and care of office and departmental supplies. The positions in this department are those of superintendent of construction, purchasing agent, head engineer, engineers, electricians, carpenters, painters, head elevator attendant and elevator men and women, head porter and porters, night superintendent, watchmen, and cleaners.

**Assignment of Stenographers.**—In the office organization of many large stores stenographers are not always assigned to one department and the disposal of their time is under the direction of the store superintendent. When an executive or department head has need of stenographic assistance the assignment of a stenographer is made by the store superintendent.

**Records Department.**—The records department is in charge of a records manager who may also be a trained accountant and system expert. The department is usually divided into the following subdivisions, the work of which is described in each case:

1. The credit and collection division investigates the financial standing of all applicants for credit, approves the opening of accounts, and makes collection after the bills have been rendered.

2. The charge account division makes a record of all the sales and sees that itemized statements are sent to customers at the close of each month, and that all payments are posted to customers' accounts.

3. The cashier's office receives and deposits in the bank all cash that comes in, and keeps a record of all that goes out.

4. The C. O. D. division keeps the accounts of all sales made to customers, and sees that the delivery department delivers the merchandise, and that the proper returns are made to the cashier's office.

5. The auditing division makes a daily examination and comparison of all transactions to determine that the record of each sale as made by the selling department agrees with the cash received or with charge accounts, and that the C. O. D. accounts are billed. The department also verifies the total transactions for each day and makes a daily report of its work.

6. The purchase record department keeps a record of all outstanding orders for merchandise and enters on the daily sheet all invoices of merchandise, making certain that they are properly checked with the actual merchandise received after which the invoices are returned to the payment department for entry and payment.

7. The payment department has charge of the payment of all invoices by check after the goods have been properly approved as to quality and quantity, and the invoices as to the correct prices and correct extensions and footings.

8. The stock record department keeps a record by selling departments of the merchandise received, which is listed by date and day of invoice, name of manufacturer, total cost, and the per cent of profit on each invoice.

9. The statistical department furnishes various kinds of statistical statements and reports for the information of the executives of the business.

10. The bookkeepers whose work is posting accounts to ledgers sometimes form a distinct division.

**Store Advertising.**—Advertising in a large retail store is a separate department under the head of a manager. The last twenty-five years have completely revolutionized advertising and reduced it to fundamental principles, the mastery of which requires careful study. A few years ago, many merchants did not consider advertising worth consideration but today it would be difficult to find any store of ordinary size which does not advertise and maintain its patronage largely by this means.

Advertising has been defined as the art of creating a new want. This definition is not strictly accurate. The human mind must be jogged from time to time or it tends to forget. Advertising is employed to insure the continual use of goods or to create new wants and to reawaken desires which lie dormant. People need to be told what will give them pleasure, provide more comfort, and bring health, wealth, and happiness. Advertising may be more accurately defined as the art of acquainting people with the name, nature, and uses of a salable commodity or of a useful service.

**Scope of Retail Advertising.**—Advertising in the retail business is broader in its scope than the technical meaning of the term implies. It includes everything that can be done to attract the attention of customers and help draw them to the store to purchase the goods for sale. One of the best advertisements of every store is the satisfied customer who praises the store and its goods. No form of advertising can build up a business unless it is supported by satisfied customers. Good-will toward a store is the best kind of publicity. A store, when run by efficient salespeople and when it enjoys a reputation for fairness in its dealings, increases its trade because of these facts. In stores where salespeople respect and like their employer and where the employer does everything he can for his employees from paying good wages to looking after their health, comfort, and enjoyment, these facts are good advertising.

The character of the building, its front, windows, and situation is another form of advertising. The display of goods in the window, the display of goods in the store, the arrangement of the store, the appropriateness of its fittings, its lighting, heating, and ventilation all have an important bearing on advertising. Nevertheless advertising proper is limited in retail merchandising to publicity for the store secured by means of printed matter.

**The Advertising Department.**—The advertising department in a large store is usually divided into the following divisions:

1. Newspaper advertising
2. Art department
3. Sign department
4. Circulars and announcements



In some stores, the window display work is in charge of the advertising department, while in others a separate department handles the window trims. The positions in the advertising department are those of advertising manager, head of the art department, head window-dresser, and head of the sign department.

The advertising manager is the spokesman of the store. It is his duty to present it, and its goods, in such a manner as to attract and hold the patronage of the public. In his work he must follow the established store policy. But the success of his work depends largely upon the reputation of the store he advertises, as determined by the value of the goods offered for sale and the service rendered by the store and its personnel.

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### Questions

1. Describe the chief factors of store organization.
2. What are the requirements of a general manager? Describe his duties.
3. What are the duties of the merchandise manager?
4. State the departmental divisions of a retail business. What are its advantages?
5. What are the duties of the buyer?
6. What is the rôle of the buyer in advertising?
7. What is the function of the returned goods department?
8. What is the function of the receiving-room?
9. What are the duties of the professional shoppers?
10. Outline a plan for the management of the alteration department.
11. What are the duties of the store superintendent?
12. What are the duties of a floor manager?
13. What are the usual divisions of the records department?
14. Who adopts the advertising policy?
15. What are the divisions of the advertising department?

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## CHAPTER XIX

### SALES CHECK

**The Sales Book.**—In all stores where cash registers are not used it is necessary for the sales clerk to make out a sales check in a loose-leaf book in which is entered each sale as made. This sales book consists of a pad of sales checks, held in position by a metal device. A sheet called a “tally” or “record sheet” is slipped in the front or back of the cover which is usually made of cardboard or leather. The record sheet contains two columns with lines ruled across and numbered consecutively to correspond with the numbers on the sales checks. The amount of each sale is entered on the tally sheet opposite the number corresponding to that of the sales check, with cash sales on one side, and all other sales on the other side of the number. At the end of the day the sales are totaled and their amount is entered on the reverse side of the tally. When more than one pad and tally are filled up during a day, the tallies are pinned together and one sales report is made for the total amount of sales.

In some stores each salesperson personally turns in her or his sales book at the end of each day; in other establishments specially appointed persons collect the books at the end of the day, and distribute them the following morning; in other cases only the tally is turned in, the salespersons retaining the sales book. Some stores have sales books of two colors, each color to be used on alternate days. This is for the purpose of convenience in auditing.

As salespersons are responsible for the care and use of the

sales book they should not allow it to leave their possession unless collected by a person duly appointed for the purpose.

**Description of the Sales Book.**—Sales books may be so contrived that the checks are made out either in duplicate or triplicate. A duplicate sales book contains two leaves for each transaction which are called original and duplicate sales checks. The triplicate sales book is made up of three leaves for each transaction, called original, duplicate, and triplicate checks, respectively. The checks are numbered consecutively, and the two or three copies which make up the set bear the same number.

When entering a sale upon the original or top check, it is necessary to use a soft pencil and apply a certain amount of pressure for the purpose of making a clear impression upon the duplicate and triplicate checks. In the duplicate book, the carbon is placed between the original and duplicate copy, with the carbon face down. In the triplicate book either two single-faced carbons may be placed, one between the original and duplicate copies, and the other between the duplicate and triplicate sheets, with the carbon down; or if the triplicate sheet is of tissue paper, one double-faced carbon may be inserted between the original and duplicate sheets. In writing upon an original check in a triplicate sales book, three copies are made. Care must be taken to insure the agreement of the number of the tissue sheet with the corresponding sales check and that the triplicate is an exact copy of the original check. The tissue sheets are for reference and should be carefully preserved.

**The Sales Check.**—A sales check is made up of three parts; the address coupon, the body, and the voucher. The

address coupon is the upper portion on which are entered the address of the purchaser and sometimes such explanatory shipping instructions as the date of a future delivery, or how the goods are to be sent—by freight, express, or parcel post. When goods are delivered by the store's delivery system, shipping instructions are unnecessary.

The body of the sales check is the middle portion separated from the coupon by a perforated line. In this space the salesperson writes the date of the sale, the kind of goods sold, the quantity, the price per unit, the amount of the sale, how sold, charge name and address, and any other information required by the management.

The voucher is the lower portion of the check, separated from the body by a perforated line. This is used to record the amount and kind of sale, the amount of cash received, the date, and the salesperson's number.

**Varieties of Sales Checks.**—Some stores have three different forms of sales checks, according to the kind of sale, cash, charge, or C. O. D., while others use two forms, one for cash and the other for charge and C. O. D. sales. There is a growing tendency to adopt a simple system of one sales check so arranged as to meet the requirements of all sales.

**Sales Check Errors.**—A rigid rule in all stores is that a sales check must not be altered or erased. If an error is made and a change on the check is necessary, a floor manager should be asked to make the check void after which a new check may be made out. This rule is absolutely necessary, as hurried erasures and careless corrections lead to serious errors and blunders. Since all checks must be accounted for, void checks must be turned in at the end of the day.

Many errors arise because of failure to record correctly the names and addresses of customers. A wrong address may be and usually is a cause of trouble and expense. It takes time to trace a misdirected parcel and frequently the goods are mused, they depreciate in value and are sometimes ruined through the handling caused by their delivery to a wrong address. Moreover, the delay in the delivery of the goods is always annoying and may be inconvenient to a customer who has planned to use the article at a certain time. It often requires much tact and diplomacy to overcome the irritation and ill will which a customer naturally experiences when purchases go astray.

Every salesperson should take special pains to make certain of the correctness of both name and address after they are entered on the sales check. If there is any doubt as to the spelling of a name the salesperson should not hesitate to ask for the correct spelling. After the name and address have been recorded, they should both be read slowly to the customer for verification. This does not take much time, and the guarantee as to the correctness of the information more than pays for the trouble.

**Cause of Errors.**—To write clearly is a necessary qualification in a salesperson. Errors in name and address are often due to illegible and indistinct writing, or to a lack of proper pressure upon the pencil, or to misplaced carbons. This last cause of errors is particularly liable to happen when parcels are labeled with duplicate address coupons. When the carbon slips out of its proper place, or when it is worn, the writing on the original does not make a clear and distinct impression upon the duplicate copy; or if the carbon is not high enough, either the upper portion

of the name or the entire name will be omitted on the duplicate copies.

Quantities, goods, and prices should always be written plainly and care should be exercised in the use of abbreviated forms. Serious and costly errors may arise through carelessness in not correctly describing the article. Helen Rich Norton, for years a teacher of retail selling in department stores, gives a good illustration of the trouble caused by this form of carelessness.

A customer who had received a bill marked "Groceries, \$1.35" reported to the office that she had never bought groceries at that particular store. The head of the adjustment department looked up the original charge check and found that it read "1 puddin' \$1.35." He showed the check to the customer, but she insisted that she had never purchased anything in the grocery department, and moreover, had never entered that department. He then noticed that the department number on the check was that of the book department. Further investigation disclosed that the customer had bought a copy of Mark Twain's book "Puddin' Head Wilson."

**The Evils of Misspelling.**—Many people are annoyed and even become angry when their names are misspelled. This sort of carelessness reflects upon the intelligence and education of the salesperson. A salesperson who is careless in spelling the name of a customer is usually careless in other matters, and the customer consequently loses faith in what is said, and thereby loses faith in the store. It should be a rigid rule in every store that the name of the customer be carefully checked as to its spelling when first written upon a sales check.

**Rules for the Prevention of Mistakes.**—The following rules should be carefully followed in securing a customer's name and address:

1. The salesperson should get the customer's undivided attention.

2. If the name and address are not clearly understood at first, the customer should be requested in a courteous manner to repeat the information.

3. The writing should be clear and distinct with sufficient pressure on the pencil to make a clear carbon impression.

4. Care should be exercised to see that each carbon is properly placed and that worn-out carbons are not used.

5. The street, name, and house number should be secured. If the customer lives in an apartment house, it is advisable to get the name of the house and the apartment number. If the road only is mentioned the name of the nearest intersecting road should be secured.

6. The abbreviation "City" should not be used for the full name such as New York City. The use of this word is vague and indefinite and often results in a misunderstanding. How easily an error may arise is shown by the following mistake.

A customer gave her address as 254 Walnut Street. The salesperson asked, "City?" in place of New York City, and the customer thoughtlessly replied, "Yes." After a week, upon the customer complaining that she had not received her goods, it was found that her home was located in Newark, New Jersey.

7. A parcel must not be delivered to a hotel, institution, wharf, ferry, railroad depot, or other public place unless addressed to some person. If that person is not well known, or the address is only temporary, as of a transient guest at a



hotel, the parcel should be addressed in care of some other person.

8. The customer should be asked to verify the name and address.

9. When the amount received in payment is entered upon the sales check, the amount should be repeated to the customer.

10. When the change is received it should be counted before it is given to the customer.

11. Care should be taken to give correct amount and correct name of article sold.

James W. Fisk, gives the following list of the errors most commonly made in the use of sales checks:

1. Using wrong sales book.
2. Check not dated.
3. Clerk's number omitted.
4. Wrong amount received.
5. Wrong amount of sale.
6. Amount received omitted.
7. Amount of sale omitted.
8. Amount changed on checks.
9. Poor figures and poor writing.
10. No address label made out for parcels sent.
11. Wrong house number.
12. Wrong street.
13. Enclosures not O K'd.
14. Discounts not O K'd.
15. Void checks not turned in.
16. Void checks not voided on index.
17. Overcharges.
18. Undercharges.

**Prevention of Carelessness.**—Carelessness is the cause of at least two-thirds of the mistakes made in any store. As a means of reducing the expense of store blunders and mistakes one large store has printed suggestions and rules which must be carefully read and followed by its salespersons:

1. There should be some particular place to keep the sales book, and a salesperson should look for her number on the cover before the check is made out.

2. One check ahead should be dated and filled in with the salesperson's number.

3. The amount received from the customer should be repeated and filled in immediately in the "amount received" space.

4. The amount of sale should be calculated twice, and care should be exercised to make certain that the amount noted in the "amount received" space and that on the salesperson's voucher correspond with the amount of sale on the body of the check.

5. A check when once written should never be changed; it should be voided by the floor manager, and a new one issued.

6. Sufficient time should be taken to write the check plainly as hurried writing usually causes errors.

7. As soon as a customer states that she wants a parcel sent, the salesperson should begin to fill in the address label. Sometimes salespersons wait to make out the address labels and then forget them. If there is doubt as to the correct spelling of the name or street ask the customer in a polite way to spell it. After the name and address are written, the sales book should be turned around for the customer's inspection and verification.

8. Salespersons should know what checks are to be O K'd by the floor manager and care should be taken that they are.

Cashiers are instructed not to receive checks that require an O K and have not been passed upon. Failure on the part of the salesperson to get a check O K'd will cause unnecessary delay.

9. All voided checks must be turned in at night, and if all checks to be voided are placed in a secure place until trade is slack and the floor manager is near, it will be easier to have them all voided at the same time.

10. If goods are to be charged the purchaser must always be known. A salesperson may tactfully ask, "Is Mrs. [using the charge name] the purchaser?"

11. After a check is made out, it is advisable to glance over it to make sure that nothing is omitted. The following should be watched:

- (a) That no wrong extension is made.
- (b) That every check is dated.
- (c) That the space "How sold" should be blank unless goods are sent collect on delivery, and that the C. O. D. should be written.
- (d) When goods are sold for cash, the space "How sold" should be blank, while all other transactions are named, using the following abbreviations:

Chg. ....	Charge
C. O. D. ....	Collect on delivery
W. C. ....	Will call
Exc. ....	Exchange
Acc. ....	Accommodation packages

**Efforts to Eliminate Mistakes.**—Various methods have been tried in different stores to reduce the number of errors. Some stores levy fines but this method is not satisfactory as it

invariably arouses antagonism and disloyalty; in other stores the salesperson who makes more than three errors in a month is called to the superintendent's office and warned that dismissal will be the penalty if the offense is repeated two months in succession. In another store the offending salesperson visits the educational director at an appointed time during the following day to explain how the error was made.

A large store employing on the average 250 salespersons finds that the following system of handling mistakes proves a satisfactory means of reducing their number.

All errors causing serious trouble are reported to the educational department on error-slips provided for the purpose, from the auditing and delivery departments, the packers, cashiers, transfer desk, time desk, and floor superintendents. In every possible case the error is at once brought to the attention of the person who made it and an error-slip is filled out. This is done to bring responsibility home to the proper person. If the clerk asserts that he or she is not to blame for the mistake an explanation or a protest may be written on the back of the error-slip after it has been signed. Protested errors are handled by the educational department. After the floor superintendents have examined the error-slips they are filed in the office, in the envelopes provided for each salesperson, which envelopes hold all matter relating to his or her record. Once a month the record is examined and each salesperson is notified as to the number of errors made. Salespersons against whom no errors are reported for the month receive a personal letter signed by the manager expressing appreciation for the good record made, and inclosing an honorary card entitling the holder to a half-holiday. For every two months during which a salesperson makes no errors an extra half-holiday is given.

**Kinds of Sales Transactions.**—There are many different kinds of sales transactions in the average store, and the following is a list of those which the salesperson in a large department store would ordinarily be called upon to handle:

1. C. O. D. (Collect on delivery)
2. Paid taken
3. Paid sent
4. Charged taken
5. Charged sent
6. Charged on one address and sent to another
7. Even exchange
8. Uneven exchange
9. Discount
10. Credit to cover
11. Special delivery
12. Employee's purchase taken and charged
13. Employee's purchase charged and sent to the door
14. Employee's purchase charged and sent home
15. Employee's purchase paid
16. C. O. D. driver accept check
17. Part cash and part paid
18. Inclosed packages
19. Transfer taken
20. Transfer sent
21. L. O. G. (Lady's own goods)
22. Future delivery and memo charge
23. C. O. D. deposit

**Transactions Requiring Floor Manager's Signature.**—In certain kinds of sales the sales checks must be vouched for and signed in authorization by an official, usually the floor manager. The following are examples of such sales:

1. Money order or express order given in payment.
2. Special delivery.
3. Goods charged to one address but sent to another.
4. Accept check C. O. D.
5. Goods charged and delivered over the counter.
6. Goods held by the store until a future date at customer's request.
7. "As is" or allowance for price on damaged or imperfect goods.
8. Goods worn or taken out of the store without being wrapped.
9. C. O. D. for examination; that is a customer is allowed to keep goods for a specific period, at the expiration of which the delivery boy calls and receives either goods or cash value.
10. Deposit sales or where goods are held in store until a certain date when the customer pays the amount due.
11. Missing or void checks.
12. Paid with bank checks.
13. Charge credits.
14. Inclosures.
15. Exchanges.
16. Discount sales to employees and other people entitled to the same.
17. C. O. D. exchange.
18. Goods charged to one person but taken by another.
19. Charged and taken, over ten dollars.
20. Delivered, paid or charged.
21. New delivered, old sent.
22. L. O. G. (Lady's own goods.)
23. Sent or taken with L. O. G.
24. Discounts.

### Questions

1. What is a sales book?
2. Describe the general practice when turning in sales.
3. Describe the different kinds of sales books.
4. What are the three parts of a check?
5. What are the different forms of a sales check?
6. What errors may arise if a sales check is altered or erased?
7. What errors may arise from indistinct writing and misplaced carbons?
8. Why is it necessary to correctly describe the article purchased?
9. What rules should be rigidly followed in securing name and address?
10. In what different ways may carelessness be the cause of errors?
11. Describe in detail an error system.
12. Mention the list of transactions that occur in the average store.
13. What sales must be vouched for by the floor manager?
14. Why are fines not satisfactory in reducing errors?
15. What precautions should be used by the salesperson to make certain that the proper name and address have been secured?

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## CHAPTER XX

### SYSTEMS AND METHODS

**The Use of Transfer System.**—The systems and methods used in stores are matters with which salespersons must be familiar before they can take their place behind the counter. The transfer is a method of sale that frequently proves advantageous to both customer and store. In a department store for instance a customer often buys a number of articles in different departments and requires them to be assembled and delivered in one or more parcels and to pay for them in one account. The record of such purchases is usually made upon a card called a transfer check on which all purchases are entered. The transfer is all that is necessary for the customer to carry with her as she makes her purchases in different departments. On the sales check made out for each purchase are entered the transfer number and the customer's name and address. The articles selected are sent to a central transfer desk where customers receive their packages; or if the goods are to be delivered, the transfer list of purchases is sent to the delivery department. The final settlement of all transactions is made at one time and the liability of mistakes in making change is thus reduced to a minimum.

**Advantages of Transfer System.**—The transfer check performs a definite service for a customer. It does away with the inconvenience of carrying numerous small packages and saves the time usually spent in waiting for each parcel to be

wrapped and in receiving change. It also eliminates the possibility of a customer losing some of the smaller parcels carried from counter to counter. When the goods are to be delivered the transfer saves expense because it enables all parcels for one purchaser to be accumulated in one shipment.

In every store using the transfer system it is the rule for transfer checks and the merchandise they represent to be dispatched at once to the transfer department, and this rule should be strictly adhered to. Salespersons usually deliver both transfer check and merchandise immediately upon sale to the floor manager or inspector who then O K's the check, after which both are sent to the transfer department.

The advantages which accrue from the use of a transfer check may be summarized as follows:

1. The transfer card collects all parcels belonging to one purchaser at a central desk where they are wrapped in a single parcel.

2. The system enables the customer to pay for all purchases in a single payment saving the time spent in waiting for change and for parcels to be wrapped, and it also reduces mistakes to a minimum.

3. It is advantageous to have all goods for the same customer delivered at one delivery.

4. The store saves labor and wrapping materials through wrapping all purchases in one or more large parcels instead of in numerous small ones.

5. If goods are sent by parcel post or express, the expense is lessened.

6. There is a tendency, if a customer is shopping on a transfer card, to do all purchasing in one store. The system thus tends to increase sales.

**Handling of Accommodation Parcels.**—Frequently salespersons are requested as an accommodation to wrap with purchased goods, goods or parcels carried by the customer. An accommodation parcel may usually be accepted to be wrapped with any kind of purchase whether the goods are to be taken, sent, paid, charged, or transferred. Some stores make an exception when goods are to be delivered C. O. D. This is due to the fact that the C. O. D. goods are the property of the store until paid for and a customer may refuse to pay for a C. O. D. package in which the accommodation parcel is wrapped. Hence, instead of wrapping it in a C. O. D. package it is often sent as a separate parcel.

Any accommodation packages containing combustibles, matches, and explosives, breakable articles, or anything that is likely to spill, as liquid in bottles, or powders, should not be accepted to be wrapped with other goods, but should be packed separately. The name and address of the customer should be written on every package enclosed. If the accommodation consists of an article that is not wrapped such as a pair of gloves, rubbers, or a handkerchief, each article should be recorded on the sales check by name, and not by number. The rule in most stores is that every accommodation package or unwrapped accommodation article must be authorized by the signature of the floor manager and that parcels for customers should not be kept at the counter. Customers should be referred in a courteous manner to the parcel desk where their goods may be checked.

**Unusual Sale Transactions.**—The following are irregular sales transactions that frequently arise in almost every store. A customer buys an article and wishes to wear it leaving the old one for delivery. The fact should be noted on the sales

check and the transaction O K'd by the floor manager. Many stores allow special rate of discount to employees who wish to make purchases for their own use. The salesperson should know the rate of discount and the sales check should be O K'd by the floor manager. Some stores allow special rates to clergymen, and sometimes for goods purchased for business purposes. The salesperson should make a careful inquiry as to these rates and the sale must be O K'd by the floor manager. If a customer presents a bank check, post-office order, or express money order, he should be identified by an employee, and the paper referred to the credit department.

If a store sends goods by parcel post or express, the fact should be known by its employees as well as any conditions attached to the privilege. The information can then be given when it is sought by a customer.

**Delivery of Packages to Customers.**—In stores where salespersons hand customers their parcels, a package should never be given to a customer until the cash slip with or without change has been received from the cashier's desk. It is a serious breach of duty to allow a wrapper, or a cash boy or girl, or another salesperson to give out a package. A wrong parcel given out involves two innocent parties—the customer and the store. It causes annoyance to the former, and often means a loss to the store. If during a rush a salesperson leaves one customer who is waiting for a parcel to attend to another, care should be taken not to keep the first customer waiting for her parcel. To insure the delivery of the correct parcel to its owner the salesperson should request the customer to retain the sales check. Then in giving out the parcel the sales check number should be compared with the

number in the sales book, and if there is any doubt the merchandise should be verified.

It is a rule in many stores that no goods pass from the salesperson to the purchaser direct. All articles are sent to the wrappers who inspect every sale as to goods, amount, price, and condition. If the customer desires to take away a purchase without having it wrapped, the salesperson must get the O K of the floor manager.

Goods sold C. O. D. are treated as a charge and are so entered on tally cards. If a customer buys something and pays only part of the purchase price, desiring to have the balance collected on delivery, some stores require salespersons to make out two sales checks; one cash and the other C. O. D. Both checks must be O K'd by the floor manager, and all details of the sale should appear on the C. O. D. check.

**Credit Identification.**—Some stores use charge coins for the purpose of identifying their credit customers. A charge coin is a metal disc bearing an individual number, and stamped with the initials or name of the firm issuing it. When a purchase is made, the customer shows the coin to the sales clerk so that the account can be identified with as little delay as possible. The coin number is written on the sales check in a space provided for it. A salesperson should never put a coin number on a sales check without seeing the coin and carefully noting its number.

Instead of charge coins some stores use special credit cards, numbered and signed by an official or member of the firm. If a person who has a credit account wishes another member of the family to make a purchase on the same account, a written order to that effect should be presented by the person who is to make the purchase. In some stores, such an order

is referred to the floor manager, while in others it is presented to the salesperson, and sent to the auditing department.

**Goods Held for Repairs.**—Some stores issue hold tickets to record the receipt of a customer's own goods. These tickets are issued when goods are left for work to be done on them, the goods to be delivered on presenting the hold tickets. If a charge is made for the work a separate cash, charge, or C. O. D. sales check is written, recording the amount of the charge and the hold-ticket number.

In all classes of work to be done, a work ticket describing the nature of the work is issued by the hold-ticket clerk for record. The work ticket then goes to the workrooms and when returned with the finished goods it is placed on file by the hold-ticket clerk for reference. When a customer's own goods are called in for examination as in the adjustment of a complaint, they are returned to the customers on presentation of the hold ticket upon which they were originally recorded.

**Exchange of Goods.**—It is today the sales policy of almost every store to exchange goods which do not meet with a customer's approval. Mr. Wanamaker, the well-known department store owner was the first merchant to put this policy into practice and the announcement of this innovation in merchandising caused a sensation in the retail world. He stated that any article that did not fit well, was not the proper color or quality, or did not please the folks at home, or for any other reason was not perfectly satisfactory should be brought back at once; and also if it was returned to the store as purchased within ten days, the money would be refunded. He stated that it was his intention to give satisfactory value in every sale made, and

those who were not pleased with what they bought would do the store a positive favor by returning the goods in exchange for their money. Many merchants at that time declared that the granting of the privilege of return would render business in many cases unprofitable. As time went on they gradually began to adopt the Wanamaker policy until today the privilege of returning goods is almost universally given to their customers by all dry-goods stores.

**Abuse of Exchange Privilege.**—Eagerness to secure trade has caused many merchants to be too liberal in their exchange policy. Many customers abuse the privilege and some even return goods after they have been worn or borrowed for special occasions. As an example of this abuse the following is reported by an official of a well-known Boston store.

A customer purchased children's clothing to the amount of \$50, stating at the time of purchase that the child for whom the clothes were bought was ill and could not be brought down town. A few days later the buyer of the department saw a notice of the child's death from scarlet fever. About a week later a box containing the original \$50 worth of clothing was returned to the store for credit. The buyer accepted the merchandise, but carried it at once to the engine room where it was burned. Customers have been known to return merchandise which had been in their possession for a year. If merchants accept the policy that the "customer is always right" they are sometimes taken advantage of when they believe that it is better to lose money on merchandise than to offend a customer. For this reason many storekeepers have been compelled to put certain limitations upon the exchange of merchandise. Even Mr. Wanamaker in introducing the original policy imposed two limitations:

1. The returned merchandise was to be in as good condition as when purchased.
2. It was to be returned within ten days.

**Regulation of Exchange Privilege.**—Chambers of commerce and retail merchant associations in many large cities have found it necessary to draw up regulations covering the exchange of merchandise and to publish these regulations in the daily papers. An example of this regulatory action is that taken by the Chamber of Commerce of Cleveland in November, 1915, and is typical of the trend of effort to limit the abuse of the exchange practice. The regulations are listed below:

#### A—NON-RETURNABLE ARTICLES

The following articles for legal, sanitary, or other reasons cannot be accepted for return:

1. Bedding and mattresses.
2. Garments that have been altered for the purchaser.
3. Shoes which have been altered.
4. Combs, hair-brushes, and tooth-brushes.
5. Hair goods and hair ornaments.
6. Rubber goods sundries.
7. Women's hats which have been made specially to the customer's order.
8. All goods cut from the piece at the request of the customer.
9. All merchandise which has been made to order or specially ordered, and which is not regularly carried in stock.

#### B—RETURNABLE ARTICLES

Any article of merchandise which for some good reason is to be returned to the store must be returned within a reasonable time—two business days.

#### C—CONDITION—SALES CHECKS

1. No article will be accepted for return unless it is in its original condition and boxing.



2. No merchandise of any kind which has been used will be accepted for return.

3. The sales check must accompany all returned merchandise.

#### D—GIFTS

1. Gifts of all kinds (Christmas, wedding, birthday, etc.) if returned will be accepted only in exchange for other merchandise and will not be credited to the account of the person receiving the gift.

2. Gifts may be returned for exchange at current prices only.

#### E—UNJUST DEMANDS

The names of all customers who continually make unjust claims upon the merchants and of customers who return C. O. D. merchandise will be reported to a central clearing house. Such information will eventually become a part of the credit information supplied every merchant.

#### F—DEPOSITS ON "WILL CALL" PURCHASES

A deposit of not less than 25 per cent of the purchase price will be required on all "will call" purchases.

#### G—NON-RETURNABLE TAGS

Uniform tags will be supplied for use on articles bought with the privilege of return. If the tag has been removed from an article it will not be accepted for return. Any article bought with the privilege of return will be considered sold and not returnable if the merchant is not advised within two business days that it is to be returned.

The above recommendations were signed by fifteen firms who asked the public to co-operate in a reform that would be a benefit to everyone in the community. Every business policy has its advantages and disadvantages. The exchange policy has been in practice for more than fifty years. It works admirably with intelligent and reasonable customers, as it suggests fair dealing and establishes more fully the confidence of the buying public. Shopping on approval is a

privilege appreciated by many and is one that encourages buying. Many merchants declare that the advantages of the practice more than out-balance the losses that may arise from its abuse by a few unscrupulous customers.

**Losses Due to Exchange Privilege.**—Exchanges cause much trouble and loss in the following way:

1. Handling and packing goods that are exchanged often causes such injury to them that it is necessary to sell them at a reduced price.

2. There is expense in handling and packing and in delivering goods which are not sold. Frequently it is necessary for the store to call for the goods that are to be exchanged.

3. Often merchandise out on exchange might have been sold. Many sales are lost in large stores due to goods being out subject to exchange and later returned.

**When to Exchange Goods.**—Many salespersons encourage customers to take articles home for trial regardless of the probability of their sale. A friend of the author once remarked that the girl behind the counter was so insistent that he should take an article home on trial, for which he had no use, that he took it because he did not wish to offend her. The article was tried and sent back. Salespersons should be able to read their customers sufficiently to know when it is advisable to suggest sending articles on approval. A little study of the psychology of exchange will greatly reduce the abuse of the practice without causing inconvenience or loss to the public. Customers should be led to the decision to buy, and should not be encouraged to take goods home for approval. In many cases where goods are sent home for approval, the salesperson might have made the sale.

It is easier to suggest taking goods on approval than to clinch the effort to make a sale. If it is necessary to sell goods on approval, tact and diplomacy as well as a little thought as to the appeal of the goods to the customer will greatly reduce the number of articles returned. Some salespersons believe in showing a wide range of stock rather than in narrowing the selection to suit the customer. For this reason many stores have found it necessary to limit the number of articles that may be sent home for approval. It is evident that with careful training of salespersons the exchange abuses may be greatly reduced.

**Attitude Towards Customers.**—Many salespersons show a resentful attitude when asked by customers to exchange or take back goods. Salespersons should remember that as long as it is the policy of the store to permit the exchange of merchandise it is their duty to show as much courtesy in the transaction as in making a sale. Frequently customers are offended through the discourtesy shown when a request is made to take back an article. An exchange, if properly handled, may lead to a new sale in a different line; or courteous treatment may so impress a customer that future sales will result. It is exceedingly poor salesmanship and affects both salesperson and store to meet requests for exchange in an unwilling spirit or to adopt an attitude of resentment.

**Effect of Courteous Exchange Treatment.**—Tact in handling a customer who wished to return a coat, led to the purchase of a more expensive coat, and also to another sale. A young girl bought a \$30 coat and seemed entirely satisfied with it, but as her mother was not pleased the mother and daughter took the coat back to the store and asked for credit.

The mother explained that she disliked the color and thought the price too high. She allowed the salesman to show her some \$24 coats, the next range in price, but these were not satisfactory. The salesman thought to himself, "They are going to buy a coat somewhere. The daughter is easily pleased; I am going to win the mother." Removing from sight the coats not admired, he showed some \$35 models, bringing out all the good points regarding the material, the lining, and the style. The mother finally said that she thought the \$35 coats were worth the difference in price and selected one for her daughter. She then asked the salesman to show her something for herself. To his great surprise she soon decided on a coat at \$40.

**Handling of Returned Goods.**—Returned goods should be placed in the hands of the floor manager or someone who has been appointed for that purpose. In some of the large stores a special department is maintained for their receipt and examination. In some cases, the credit received for goods returned must be traded out for other goods; yet the practice is not universal. If the goods were originally taken out on a charge account, their return merely entitled the customer to so much credit on account. A few stores have gone so far in the opposite direction as to make a specialty of the feature and even to advertise the fact that money is returned if desired. Such refunds on cash sales are made in some stores by the floor manager while in others the money is paid out at the general office. Allowances are made on damaged or imperfect goods, and on goods which are not received by the purchaser. In all cases blanks are provided to be properly filled out when the credit is allowed either by the floor manager or a salesperson whom he designates.

**Cause of Complaints.**—Complaints of many kinds need daily adjustment and the problem of dealing with them is an important one. It requires tact and diplomacy to adjust a complaint so that the customer will be satisfied. The most common complaints spring from such causes as:

1. Failure to receive the goods purchased.
2. Receipt of the wrong kind of goods.
3. Disappointment through some kind of clerical error.
4. Dissatisfaction in finding the service of the store defective.
5. Errors in the credit department.

Errors which lead to complaints and require adjustments are the following:

1. When goods have been found defective.)
2. When goods have been injured or broken in delivery.
3. When goods have failed to give satisfactory service.

Complaints or requests for adjustment are referred in small stores to persons designated by the store management and in large stores to a special complaint department. The salesperson originally concerned is asked to give information that may assist in satisfactorily adjusting the trouble between the store and the customer. "The customer is always in the right," has come to be a widely accepted slogan and many merchants declare that a policy based on this maxim is most satisfactory as well as profitable in the long run. Errors, disputes, and other difficulties which arise in the adjustment of complaints are usually referred to the floor manager.

**Handling Complaints.**—Salespersons should never in the presence of a customer place the blame for a complaint

upon any other person or department of the store. Frequently, when a customer complains about the delay in the delivery of goods purchased, the salesperson in self-defense immediately charges the fault upon the delivery service. In reality failure to deliver may be due to one or more of several causes for which the delivery service is in no way to blame as:

1. Wrong address.
2. A delayed sales check.
3. An error of inspection.
4. Delay in the work of the stockrooms.

The placing of the blame upon the delivery service, which may be a superior service and not the least at fault, does not justify the error. The customer does not care and is not interested in knowing who is at fault. A salesperson casting blame for error on any one department reflects upon the service of the store as a whole, and this tends to weaken the confidence of the customer. The policy that should be followed is not to place the blame for a complaint upon anyone but to sympathize with the complaining customer, and try to adjust the trouble in a satisfactory fashion.

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### Questions

1. What is a transfer? Describe the procedure in a transfer sale.
2. Why should transfer orders be filled at once?
3. What are the purposes of a transfer?
4. What is an accommodation parcel?
5. When should a package be delivered to the customer?
6. What are charge coins? What precautions should be taken when selling to a customer holding a charge coin?
7. What are hold tickets? When are they issued?
8. What are the advantages of the exchange policy?

9. What causes merchants to be too liberal in exchanges?
10. What limitations on exchanges have been found necessary by many merchants?
11. What expenses are incurred from exchanges?
12. How may salespersons be trained to lessen the number of exchanges?
13. What should be the attitude of salespersons toward customers returning goods? What attitude is frequently adopted?
14. State the common complaints arising in the average department store.
15. When are adjustments necessary?

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## CHAPTER XXI

### PERSONAL RELATIONS

**Co-operation between Personnel and Merchant**—The handling of salespeople is a problem which tests the ability of every merchant, and is one which is an important factor in the success of his store. The storekeeper requires to be a close student of human nature and should know his salespersons as they are and not as they are supposed to be. Business building requires the co-operation of merchant and salespersons, and this demands that the salespersons be led through self-interest.

To obtain their co-operation salespersons should be given a square deal, proper treatment and a fair wage. They should have a voice in devising methods for increasing sales and should be made to feel that they are integral parts of the store organization, all working together with the interest of the business at heart.

Co-operation has two sides but the merchant frequently sees but one. He believes that salespersons should co-operate to produce more sales but he is blind to the fact that he should co-operate with them in securing higher wages. True co-operation cannot exist without mutual benefits. The merchant and the salespersons should each obtain what they are striving for, the former increased business, and the latter higher wages. True co-operation is more than a theory; it is a necessity, and its importance is gradually being impressed upon every merchant.



**Moral Obligation of Employees.**—A moral obligation due to a store from its salespersons is to give their best mental as well as their best physical efforts. This service is not fully performed unless they become interested and enthusiastic in their work and carry out their duties with their whole heart, eager for the success and the welfare of the business. If the merchant is to win his force over to this attitude salespersons should be made to feel that they have a stake in the success of the enterprise, and that he is interested in their welfare. When they feel that they are a part of the business, and not like cogs in a large wheel, each will work for the other's welfare—all for greater selling efficiency, for more sales, and for the success of the business as a whole.

**Loyalty Towards Store.**—Though most salespersons are capable of following a worthy leader few are ever zealots for the sake of a cause, a principle, or a store. Such matters are too abstract to win much attention from the unreflecting person. It is the individual, the concrete personality, which attracts human interest. The salesperson is often loyal to his immediate superior or to his employer rather than to the store. Loyalty to a store grows from loyalty to those performing managerial functions. To create this loyalty a first essential is to place men of character in all executive offices, men who are leaders and who inspire others and win their support. If such men direct the activities of a retail business loyalty to the store is assured.

Loyalty is reciprocal. If a salesperson thinks that he has no assurance of fair treatment from his employer, it is impossible to arouse his interest in the business and inspire him with zeal in its service. A square deal is the one indispensable basis for the upbuilding of loyalty, co-operation, and enthusiasm.

**The Need for Human Sympathy.**—Human sympathy is an important factor in the success of every store organization. If every assistant manager or department head knows that the general manager appreciates his efforts, and is ready to back him in any crisis, his enthusiasm and energy for the success of the store never flags. If the salespersons know that their manager is watching their efforts with interest and regard, approving, supporting, and sparing them wherever possible, they will give their entire energy and enthusiasm to their work and thus obtain the greatest possible results. To secure selling efficiency the sympathy of the person above with the person below is essential.

Incentive and selling efficiency are closely related. Salespersons will not try to give of the best that is in them without some incentive. They cannot be expected to develop their latent ability unless they feel that they are getting good returns for their efforts. The merchant should give all his salespersons some hope of promotion. If in addition to just compensation there is the extra incentive of advancement, the inducements are offered that hold salespersons to their jobs, and that keep them working with the greatest efficiency in their own interest and in that of the business they serve.

**Permanency of Employment.**—Nothing so works against smooth and systematic routine as continual changes in a sales force. Salespersons, when they know that they are likely to be discharged at any moment, do not have the interest of the store at heart and do not give their best service. Experimenting with new salespersons is costly and the less a merchant is compelled to change his staff the greater are the possibilities of increasing the smooth and orderly operation of the business. One raw recruit among a number of trained

salespersons disorganizes the whole, adds to the expense and creates confusion. The public cannot be given high-grade service without a high-grade selling force, and the upbuilding of such a force requires that the fewest possible changes take place therein.

**Promotion from Ranks.**—Every retail merchant needs to give thought to the matter of promotion from the ranks. Hope for the future is the chief incentive for giving one's best efforts, and a business hope which appeals most strongly and creates loyalty and enthusiasm is advancement. Every merchant should make provision for filling any executive vacancy that it is possible to fill from his sales force, and salespersons should be given to understand that this is the policy of the store.

Promotion should not be based upon seniority but wholly upon ability. Preference to seniority is only justified when the senior in service is of equal ability with others qualified for a vacancy. The policy of promotion from the ranks has been adopted by many merchants. The Marshall Field Company, for instance, employs only two managers who have not been promoted from the ranks. The assurance that promotion lies ahead fosters ambition, gives hope of reward for work well done and thus makes for greater contentment with the present position. The importance of the policy is daily becoming more recognized, and its adoption is spreading to all large stores.

**Effect of Contentment on Concentration.**—A salesperson, or any other person for that matter, to do his best work should concentrate upon what he is doing. Concentration depends largely upon contentment, and has a great influence upon the

quality of the salesman's work as well as upon sales. A contented salesperson has a positive money value. Contentment binds employees and employer closely together and leads to their co-operation for the success of the business. Selling amidst gloomy surroundings, in fear of losing one's position, at unfair wages, or under constant nagging by an unreasonable manager causes salespersons' thoughts to dwell upon everything except selling. The worst frame of mind for any salesperson is one of continual brooding over underpayment. Many well-equipped stores lack the contented, efficient sales force. They have yet to learn the value of contentment and its relation to efficient selling. Many merchants who have introduced welfare movements to make their salespersons more contented with their jobs find that their consideration for their salespersons is a good business investment which more than repays the outlay.

**The Control of Tardiness.**—The smooth operation of a store demands not only faithful service but regularity and punctuality in attendance. Tardiness is a form of inefficiency which every merchant should strive to reduce to a minimum. Experience has proved that the habit of arriving late should not be overlooked, and the best way to deal with it is to make it unprofitable. Fines are the usual means for enforcing promptness. Non-payment for the time lost, the loss of a day's pay if a salesperson is late a certain number of times, suspension, and absolute discharge are among the methods used for the punishment of tardiness. No one method can be given as practicable and workable in all stores, but punishment in some form is absolutely necessary. Punishment which gives satisfaction in one store might be a failure and the cause of driving good salespersons away in another. A

merchant should remember that store organization and the personnel and character of his salespersons are never the same in two stores. Fines for tardiness are probably as good a method as any for checking the tendency to slackness. A merchant should make it clear that the purpose of the fines is punishment and that they are not a money-making proposition. The only safe way to deal with the fines collected is to devote them to some welfare movement for the sales force.

**Methods of Punishing Tardiness.**—In every large store it is imperative to adopt some method of ascertaining whether or not a salesperson is punctual in attendance. The time clock is the favorite method, but metal or wooden tags, or time-keepers, and individual tickets punched at the entrance to the store are among other methods found in practice. Many business men claim that a check upon the time that a person appears at work is not necessary and only antagonizes, but experience has proved that some method of control is absolutely necessary. If any trouble arises it is usually on account of poor judgment exercised in fixing the punishment or in the use of the fines collected.

In some cases it has been found profitable to encourage promptness by a system of rewards. An effective method is to reward the early salesperson with an increase in pay. Some merchants give cash premiums and prizes at the end of the year to all who have not been late, while some base vacations on the timekeeper's records, and reward promptness with a vacation on full pay. The adoption of the reward system requires some method of punishing tardiness. If a salesperson is tardy once and has lost all chance of obtaining a reward the tendency is to be careless about attendance in the future.

**Irregularity in Attendance.**—Irregularity in attendance has a direct bearing upon selling efficiency and is a serious problem facing every merchant. The chief cause of irregularity is sickness, and the question to be answered is—Who is responsible? The cause may be an unsanitary store. If so, the salesperson is not to blame, and the sanitation should be at once remedied. The cause may be a personal matter such as lack of nourishment, unsanitary home surroundings, or careless exposure in which case the merchant should insist upon proper nourishment and proper sanitary home surroundings. Careless exposure should be warned against.

The reasons given for absence from duty are many, and each individual case should be dealt with separately and the methods of treatment should vary. Punishment is only advisable where the cause is due to wilful negligence or carelessness. These should not be tolerated and dismissal should be the punishment for the second or third offense.

**The Responsibility of Employees.**—Every salesperson should be responsible to some higher authority and there never should be any doubt as to that authority. Authority should be so established that minor breaches of rules may be ignored when this course seems advisable, but when the time comes for action, and when all consideration has been given, the merchant should enforce his decision to the letter. Care should be exercised to give orders only through the official to whom a salesperson is immediately responsible. The giving of orders by a superior official to salespersons who are responsible to a lower official shows bad judgment, and has a tendency to lower the respect of salespersons for the official to whom they are responsible. It should not be forgotten that

the practice of showing authority for authority's sake is bad and breeds dissatisfaction and friction.

**Necessity for Discipline.**—Discipline is a necessity in every store and it is important for the merchant to work out a plan of disciplining his sales force. The method should be sufficiently broad to cover the variety of characters and dispositions found in every organization. Some salespersons are so conscientious and desirous of doing right that the slightest word of correction is all that is required. There are others who mistake kindly words for timidity and weakness. With these, talk either mild or severe has little or no effect unless they believe that more disagreeable consequences will follow. What is required is an effective method of discipline that will least interfere with harmonious working. A salesperson new to his job needs kind words, and these should be repeated if necessary several times until it is evident that kindly treatment does not produce the desired effect. Then more drastic methods should be used.

**Methods of Enforcing Discipline.**—There are many methods of enforcing discipline, such as kind words and suggestions, fines, laying off for a period of time, lowering wages, or giving a series of bad marks and discharging the employee when these amount to a certain number per week or month. Discharge is of course the most effective method but that should be used only in hopeless cases. Between the first kind word and discharge it is always advisable to have many remedies, each more severe than the one preceding. Laying off and lowering wages are too severe for ordinary breaches of discipline. These methods are so drastic that if regularly enforced they create discontent and make salespersons wilfully

careless and negligent. In laying off salespersons a merchant usually suffers most through putting new salespersons in their places.

Perhaps the best method of maintaining discipline is that of fining and if the plan is applied with judgment it is to be preferred to the others. Its success depends upon impartiality and upon sound judgment in levying the fines, and in using those collected to promote some welfare work for the salespersons. For no consideration should the merchant retain the fines collected, because if he does his sales force may believe that the purpose of fining is to make money out of their wages. This arouses distrust and anger and prevents hearty co-operation. Exceptional cases may arise in which fines may not prove a severe enough punishment and the more drastic method of lowering wages or laying off may be the better remedy.

**The Problem of Wages.**—The rate of remuneration for the work performed is the most serious problem of industry. The interest of the salesperson like that of every employee is centered in wages. If salespersons are dissatisfied with their wages and feel that they are underpaid, the ill-treatment causes friction, antagonism, and lack of interest, three of the chief causes of selling inefficiency. Selling efficiency is absolutely impossible with a sales force dissatisfied with its pay. A system of wages should appeal to both merchant and salespersons as fair and just. The great problem in every store is to get a satisfied and continued sales force, and no factor assists more in its solution than to have salespersons satisfied with their wages.

There are two parties to the wage problem; the one who pays and the one who receives the wages. It is natural for



merchants to try to get all the work they can for the wages they give, and for salespersons to try to get all the money they can for the work that they do. The harmonious co-operation of the two cannot be attained by the mere paying of wages. The question is not so much the amount paid, but whether or not the wage paid is a fair and just one. No problem has a more direct bearing upon contentment than the wage, and its satisfactory solution demands deliberation, tact, and impartiality on the part of the merchant, and reasonableness on the part of the sales force.

It is a recognized principle that every salesperson should be paid according to some method whereby the remuneration is directly proportionate to the output. A salesperson should be paid a fixed wage with a commission based upon sales. This gives an incentive for good work and is the only just method of remunerating ability and zeal in the service of the business.

**Value of Welfare Work.**—Many large employers of labor realizing the value of contented and satisfied employees have undertaken many kinds of welfare work as a means to the creation of this frame of mind. Merchants who have introduced welfare work do not hesitate to declare that the motive is purely a business one in that it pays for itself in results. Welfare work is found in the varied forms of benefit associations, educational work, athletic teams, publications, annual outings, clubs, pensions, suggestions, and savings.

Various methods of supervising welfare work are used in different stores. In some stores there is a special department for this work and in others where there is an educational director the work is usually assigned to him. As to the kind

of welfare work to introduce, a study should be made of the needs of salespersons, and the form the welfare work takes should be such as is satisfactory to the majority of the sales force. It is a waste of money to introduce certain forms of welfare work among certain types of employees. In a store with a small sales force welfare work may be as important as in a large establishment and wherever possible the work should be in charge of a competent person who has the time to look after it. If the work results in creating a better store spirit it repays its cost several times.

**Employees' Benefit Associations.**—One phase of welfare work that is rapidly gaining favor is some form of employee's insurance in case of sickness or accident, combined with the payment of a lump sum to his relatives and dependents in case of death. Such assistance is called "benefits." Benefits may be of different kinds as for sickness, disability, or in case of death to cover funeral expenses incurred by the family of the deceased or near relatives.

In organizing this kind of benefit work, the customary method is for salespersons to form a mutual benefit association and to manage it themselves. Weekly or monthly assessments are levied and are usually graduated in proportion to the salary or wages paid. The weekly amount paid and the length of time of payment in case of sickness or accident are not fixed, but vary with associations. When the fund reaches a certain amount the assessment ceases until it is necessary to replenish the fund. Frequently in case of extraordinary charges due to unusual sickness, an increased or extra assessment is made. Membership is often optional, but should be compulsory. The merchant sometimes makes occasional contributions but usually the association is self-supporting

**Educational Work.**—Educational work is carried on in large stores in the form of training schools, lectures, evening classes, and sewing and cooking classes. The illustrated lecture is of special importance in teaching processes of manufacture as well as the essential qualities of the materials out of which goods are made. Lectures and evening classes of various kinds raise the standard of education and assist in creating and fostering a more interested attitude toward the business. Merchants employing many salesgirls frequently give evening classes in sewing and cooking and sometimes these classes are provided for the wives of salesmen.

**Encouragement of Athletics.**—The encouragement of athletics is always appreciated. Wholesome recreation and outdoor exercise are good for health and create the smiling, cheerful face. Athletics may be encouraged in various ways—from contributing to the support of a ball team, to furnishing grounds and equipment, and to permitting the members of the team to take a certain amount of time off for practice. In this country baseball is the favorite game but football, basketball, tennis, and cricket receive their share of attention. Finely equipped gymnasiums and indoor ball grounds are sometimes furnished for the use of employees.

**Other Features of Welfare Work.**—Many stores publish monthly papers, usually in magazine form, which contain articles and news of interest to the sales force. Everyone in the store receives a free copy. The magazine has an additional value in teaching the sales force important facts about the making of goods and the materials out of which they are made, and it further helps to create interest in the wares handled.

The recreative side of welfare work such as outings, picnics, and indoor entertainments and amusements are valuable means of creating the happy family spirit in business. Dances and concerts are inexpensive amusements, the expense of which may be wholly or partially borne by the merchant.

Proper and wholesome forms of recreation can best be organized by the formation of clubs under the supervision of the person in charge of welfare work. The sales force should be carefully studied and the kind of club formed should depend upon the tastes and sex of the salespersons. Orchestra, mandolin, and various musical clubs are popular where a sufficient number of singers and musicians can be secured. Chess, whist, bowling, and checker clubs are favorite forms of amusement for winter evenings. Many large stores have their own bands and these furnish music on special occasions. The main work of the clubs is to promote sociability among the staff and thus help to create a friendly spirit of co-operation among employees. This spirit is a foe to jealousy and envy.

To encourage thrift on the part of salespersons, many merchants either receive savings directly and pay a good rate of interest, or encourage the formation of savings clubs and associations and supervise the investment of the funds. Employees are also given loans at low rates of interest for the purpose of building, or of buying their own homes, making repayment on the instalment plan. The salesmen of some large stores form loan associations and money is loaned to needy fellow members. Encouragement to save and to own homes makes for contentment, and timely loans to the needy often protect deserving persons from loan sharks.

Many merchants own summer places or make arrangements with the proprietors of suitable places where their

salespersons are sent on their vacations at low rates. The rates charged are sufficient to cover expenses and a healthy happy outing is assured at low cost. In a few instances the expenses of these establishments are paid by the merchant, but this generosity is exceptional.

The chief purpose of welfare work is to create contentment and a proper mental attitude toward the store. It is not philanthropic nor does it savor of paternalism, but it is guided solely by business motives. The kind of welfare work depends upon circumstances. The increased selling efficiency coming from loyal salespersons with their hearts in the success of the store and co-operating in every way to make it a success, is sufficient return for what is spent in giving pleasure, recreation, and happiness to them.

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### Questions

1. Why is co-operation necessary among members of the sales force?
2. What is the moral obligation of the salesperson to the store?
3. Why is human sympathy an important factor in a store organization?
4. What is the bearing of permanency in service on selling efficiency?
5. Why is the prospect of promotion a factor working for selling efficiency?
6. How should tardiness be treated?
7. What are the different methods for recording punctuality in attendance?
8. How should irregularity of attendance be treated?
9. Mention and explain methods for enforcing discipline.
10. Mention various kinds of welfare work that have been developed in department stores.
11. What is the purpose of a store house organ?

12. What is the chief benefit derived from welfare work?
13. How may thrift be encouraged among salespeople?
14. Mention different forms of educational work that may be introduced in a department store.
15. Outline a system of wage payment for a store.

### Collateral Reading

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## CHAPTER XXII

### STORE TRAINING

**Need for Trained Sales Force.**—Before the end of the last century little or no attention was given to the part played by the human element in the distribution of goods. Only at the opening of the present century did merchants begin to realize that efficient selling depends upon knowledge and training rather than upon instinct and chance knowledge, and that one of the corner-stones of business development is a competent sales force. The need of a trained personnel is a development of modern merchandising. Until a few years ago attention was largely concentrated on the buying end of business, but with the coming of the large department store and increased competition it has been found necessary to give more attention to the selling and administration end of retailing though many merchants even today fail to realize the importance of salesmanship. One authority on retail store organization has declared that the whole department store should be considered as an individual salesperson behind the counter with a particular piece of merchandise in her hand discussing it with the customer; and that every other activity of the store should center around the sale of this merchandise.

**The Selection of the Sales Force.**—The first essential in building up an efficient selling organization is the selection of the raw material. Retail merchants are more and more recognizing that a large share of their success comes from hiring the right kind of salespersons. The old-time method of

selecting the force was trial and error. In many businesses today the new employees are taken on trial and if not satisfactory are dismissed. This hire and fire process is wasteful and expensive, yet it is the common practice at the present time.

Continuity of service and selling efficiency go hand in hand. The necessity of discharging employees seldom arises where there is a proper system of hiring, training, and handling them. Salespersons should not be taken on and laid off, without thought or consideration for their welfare; nor can they be expected to do their best work when the possibility of their discharge arises on every pay-day. Every employee must be made to feel that the business takes an interest in fitting and adapting him to his job and that he is sure of his position while he tries to co-operate with others for the success of the business.

The study of the labor turnover in a large department store showed that it amounted to 100 per cent in one year. This means that as many employees left in one year as there were people employed in the store. A study in another store showed that the breaking in of each new salesperson cost, on the average, \$200.

No person is born an efficient salesperson, and good salesmanship depends upon training. To reduce the large economic waste due to labor turnover it is necessary to hire only persons who are adapted for a selling career and then have them properly trained. Some salespersons discover through their own efforts the qualities needed for handling customers and making sales, and in most cases this knowledge is the result of careful study. But as few persons have the inclination or the ability to develop themselves in this way and it is costly to rely on the training acquired by making mistakes,



the modern up-to-date retail merchant provides the facilities for the training and instruction of his sales force.

**Service and Training.**—When the retail trade as a whole began to recognize and to adopt the common ideal of service, a logical scheme of retail instruction followed. The search for this ideal disclosed the weakness of the present system and the defects of its methods. The manufacturer has found that all the power generated, all the belts, cogs, and machines for the distribution of that power, and the organization provided for the making of his product may be nullified in a great measure by the use of a poor or inefficient tool. A dull-cutting tool or a soft-nosed drill holds a strategic position in the production process. It furnishes the point of contact between the factory and the product. An inefficient tool point, therefore, can spoil all the stored-up effort due to the engineering and organizing skill preceding the final operation.

The retail merchant has made a similar discovery. He recognizes that the salesperson is the point of contact between his store and the public—the tool which must fashion the prospective purchaser into the finished product of a satisfied customer. The work of dull or ignorant salespersons may spoil the effects of the most costly advertising campaign or nullify the policy of service built up at a great expense of time, money, and energy. To improve the point of contact with customers by systematic training strengthens the link in the service circuit.

**Training Diminishes Errors.**—Training not only insures more efficient service but it tends to eliminate many costly errors. One large store figured out that every error in a sales check cost 25 cents for extra work necessitated in the audit

department in straightening out the matter with the customer. This store also found that a saving through the reduction of errors of at least \$15 a day followed as one of the effects of proper training. The following figures show the results in another case. In September, the month in which the store training began, the errors numbered 668, in October 301, and in November 203. In the shipping-room of the same store before training began, 1,000 wrong addresses were written out in the busy Christmas month. In the same month of the following year the mistakes were reduced to 120 and in the New Year's deliveries only 2 out of 500 parcels were incorrectly addressed.

**Schools for Salesmanship.**—During the past few years, many retail establishments have opened store salesmanship schools and many other concerns will be driven by the necessity of competition to do the same thing. The following is an account of the benefits derived from instruction in such a school as carried on in a large store.

The value of the instruction is perhaps best illustrated by the attitude of the salespersons themselves. At first, many clerks erroneously thought that the classes were to be made up of employees whose work was indifferent or unsatisfactory, and that attendance was a reflection upon their selling ability. This impression soon changed. The clerks who at first thought it would be a stigma to attend were soon loudest in their praise of the school and of the value of the training they received. Some expressed regrets that the classes were not held for a longer period and many even made a request to take the same course over a second time. It was especially gratifying to the management to find that salespersons of many years' experience frankly and voluntarily acknowl-

edged the great assistance which they received from the instruction. The buyers and floor managers selected the employees who were to receive instruction and the executives soon noted the improvement of those who attended the classes when their work was compared with that of others who had not taken the training. The verdict of all was unanimous. They spoke in the most flattering terms of the good results achieved and of the great improvement that only a short course made in the selling of a salesperson.

**How to Manage a School.**—The best and most economical way to create an efficient sales force is to choose boys and girls with a natural aptitude for a selling career and develop them through systematic training. Public schools can give valuable educational assistance but they cannot take the place of the training school and apprenticeship classes conducted in the larger stores. In the organization of such schools the selection of apprentices should be made with care. A physical examination of all applicants is desirable, and if any defects are found which interfere or would be likely to interfere with their work behind the counter they should not be hired. Boys and girls must reach a certain age before they are ready for training, say sixteen years for boys, and fifteen for girls.

The physical examination should be followed by an intelligence test in a written or oral examination. Boys and girls of minimum ages who have not the ability to pass an examination in the common school branches of knowledge are not likely to develop into competent salespersons. Following the physical and mental tests, attention should be given to the moral character of applicants. They should not be allowed to become apprentices until an investigation has been

made of their habits and character as a whole, at the same time carefully considering the applicant's adaptability to the work of selling goods behind a counter. Much time is wasted and expense incurred in training boys and girls who are not adapted for the selling field.

**Classes for Older Employees.**—Many stores hold classes not only for apprentices but for older salespersons. The time of the classes is so arranged as not to interfere with business or departmental duties and the hour in the morning just after the opening of the store has been found most convenient. The classes last about thirty minutes and the instruction need not be confined to younger salespersons. Tact is required to bring to the class the older salespersons who are usually antagonistic to the idea though often they are the ones who need instruction most.

The classes in one training school are graded as follows:

1. Class A, assistant buyers and heads of stock.
2. Class B, those who have been in the store five years or more.
3. Class C, those whose experience in the store covers a period of three or four years.
4. Class D, experience, one to three years.
5. Class E, experience, three to six months.
6. Class F, entrance to three months.

The outline of work for each class is carefully drawn up in advance, and when a lecture is given to the class slides are used wherever possible to illustrate the talk. Bulletins covering the main points of the lecture are distributed at the close of the class to serve as a reminder of the chief points brought out in the lecture. The salespersons are often quizzed on the

bulletins by their department heads as a means of making them pay attention to subjects discussed at the lectures.

**The Demonstration Sale.**—Instruction by means of the demonstration sale is a useful method of training and one that is commonly employed. In this method one salesperson plays the part of a buyer and another the part of the seller. To make the demonstration interesting as well as instructive the goods and surroundings should simulate as much as possible the actual store, and discussions and criticisms should be encouraged.

The demonstration sale may be carried out in five different ways as follows:

1. A salesperson tries to sell to the head of the department, or to the assistant buyer.
2. An unknown person acts the part of a customer.
3. Another customer interrupts during the sale.
4. A demonstration of how a sale should not be made is given.
5. Examples are given of how to meet various objections.

The object of the demonstration sale is to show that it pays to study methods and that certain methods bring results where others fail.

**Courses of Instruction.**—Part of the instruction in salesmanship should be lectures by buyers on their own special lines illustrated when possible by showing the merchandise in its various stages of manufacture. A library of books giving information about the merchandise handled by the store should be available for study and salespersons should be encouraged to use it. Many trade periodicals publish interest-

ing articles about the goods of their trade and these should be clipped and pasted in books for study and reference. Visits to factories should be arranged as a means of acquiring a knowledge about the making of goods, and when the article manufactured is of the kind which requires to be demonstrated in making a sale, salespersons should spend sufficient time in the factory to master the details of manufacture. In the sale of a complicated or high-priced product expert knowledge is often required and this knowledge cannot be acquired without study and effort.

Messengers, stockroom assistants, and other junior employees should be trained for salespersons' positions during the working day and perhaps the best time is just before closing as they can usually be best spared at this hour. Mr. Fisk, gives a list of topics that should be taught these young people as follows:

1. History and policy of the store.
2. The rules of the store.
3. Methods of making out sales checks and other forms, penmanship, and accuracy.
4. The location of the departments and the general character of goods in each.
5. Names of floor managers, buyers, and other executives.
6. Little leaks, losses, and wastes—what they are and how to prevent them.
7. Arithmetic—addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, fractions, and percentages.
8. English—punctuation, pronunciation, letter-writing.
9. Geography—local, prominent buildings, streets, car-lines, and railway stations.
10. Salesmanship, the principles of retail selling.

The education of the salesperson requires the general education of the public schools, and special vocational training fitting him or her for the chosen work. The latter is partly given in the schoolroom and partly in the store. Merchants should co-operate with the high schools of their cities in encouraging and helping the formation of retail salesmanship classes. The high school in many cities is ready to meet the merchants half way. Practical work should be one feature of this instruction and the best laboratory is the store, for students may spend the morning in the classroom and work in stores afternoons and Saturdays, or they may alternate weeks in school and in stores. Many merchants formerly favored this last plan, but with the opening of stores at nine o'clock, and the fact that by far the largest percentage of the selling is done during afternoons and Saturdays, they are beginning to favor the first, and are actually willing to pay liberally for the assistance given during the busy time of the day.

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### Questions

1. What has retarded improved methods in retailing?
2. State the first essential in building up an efficient selling organization.
3. What diminishes the necessity of discharging salespersons?
4. Why is a study of labor turnover necessary in a retail store?
5. Describe the evolution of instruction in retail selling.
6. What has caused the merchant to pay attention to the training of his sales force?
7. How does training lessen errors?
8. Outline a schedule of courses for a store training school.
9. What is the test of an apprenticeship school?
10. Why should care be taken in the selection of apprentices?
11. Should classes in stores be confined to apprentices? Why?

12. How may bulletins of instruction be issued?
13. Describe several methods of demonstrating a sale.
14. What is essential for the training of junior employees?
15. How may high schools co-operate with merchants in training salespersons?

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